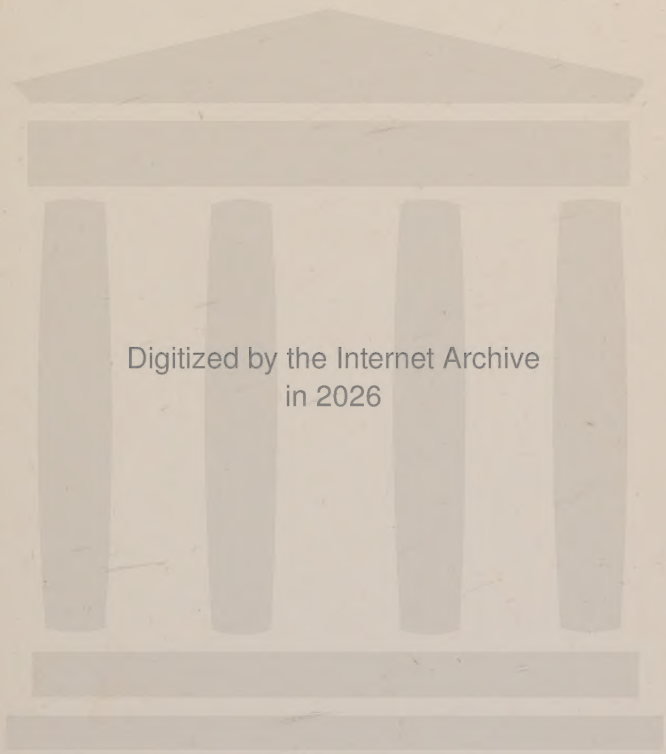
The POETICAL WORKS of ALBERT DURRANT WATSON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THE POETICAL WORKS
of
ALBERT DURRANT WATSON

OTHER WORKS OF

ALBERT DURRANT WATSON

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Albert Durrant Watson.

The POETICAL WORKS of ALBERT DURRANT WATSON

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INTRODUCTION

Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all
We know on earth, and all we need to know.
—KEATS.

WE all feel, though somewhat indefinably, that truth and beauty are the same thing, and we say their expression is art. But truth and beauty have special criteria with every individual; therefore art is, to every one of us, just what we make it.

This suggests the voice of the majority—what we call popularity—as the final tribunal of art; but there still remains the private right to weigh one mature estimate against a thousand opinions and find them wanting; and since each does his own weighing, we get the same result, and art is still just what we make it.

All this seems logical enough, till we come into the presence of sublime voices which all recognize as music; then we know that real truth and beauty are unequivocal. The whole universe thunders its applause, though we may hear only its distant echoes. It may be that no artist is at all times authentic, but he who would be a voice of fundamental music will have approval at the judgment seat of his own soul and will attain to vision of reality. Than this there is no higher gift.

The great teachers of the ages never classified the human race as the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the clever, and the stupid, but each was measured by his vision and classified as the quick or the dead. To have spiritual vision was to be alive; to be dead was to lack the inner light.

It is the office of the true poet to give the people a fuller perception of the light. He is more than a technician; he sees. He holds no brief for the past, has no illusions regarding the future. He knows all ages are transitional, and always, to the soul with opening vision, the "Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The true poet harbours no prejudices and sanctions no hypocrisies. His vision is translated into music and is heard in his song.

In a new country where materialism is the common danger, the poet should strive to rescue the people from sordid estimates of success, point them to goals of more abundant life, and lead their hearts to trust only in the highest things. If these considerations account in the least for any of the poems in this volume, I shall be glad. Two-fifths of them are printed here for the first time, and many of the earlier stanzas have been ruthlessly revised. Nevertheless they are still true to the thought and feeling of the author at the time when they were first written. It is the privilege of our race and should be its joy to rise as lords of circumstance and shape the years to universal good. The strongholds of being are ours, with all the splendour of the wider vistas when we mount to the summits of life and look out into the light.

ALBERT DURRANT WATSON.

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MAPLE AND SNOW

MAPLE AND SNOW

THE CROW

A splash of darkness on the face of day
  Spilled out of night when tips her bowl of dreams,
  Your sombre iridescent plumage gleams
With shimmering beauty in the sun's bright ray.
What subtle alchemy dissolved the night
  And out of sheer invisibility
  Extracted all its essence, setting free
One jet of ebon in expansive flight?

Your voice, though man with poor appraisement mock,
  To all the brooding silences is known;
  The tempest swings you in its thunder zone,
Your heart at rest amid the storm's wild shock.
  I hear you cawing in the quiet morn
  Among the hills and in the fields and corn.

1921

RAPTURE OF WINGS

Yonder in ether ocean, poised in a sea of light,
A great white eagle is beating its course to the height.
Onward, ascending ever, sun-scorched, bruised by the blast,
Keeping its way to the mountain, it comes there at last!
Soul! Beat thy way through the storm-lands,
Free in spontaneous flight;
The wings of thy courage shall lift thee
At last to the light.

1923

DANDELIONS

The golden dandelion stars
  Are surely loved of God the most
Of all the blossoms since He made
  Them an innumerable host.

From many an oriel of the sky
  Angels must look with raptured face
Upon those lovely, lowly flowers
  That we have scorned as commonplace.

They fade before their youth is past;
  Their silver heads rise like a prayer,
Not for a truer angel love,
  But for a tenderer human care.

In simple things a beauty lies
  That lustres all our onward way,
And love speaks clear and constantly
  In language of the common day.

1917

NIAGARA

Roar of the flood,
A rock-wraith weird in the mist,
A bow of light,
The waters that curve and twist
At the base of the height,
And through it all,
The soul's still voice
And its ceaseless call.

1920

SONG OF THE STORM

When the charge of the passionate gale beats the billows to foam,
And the shores feel the lash of the sea, white-surging and wild;
When the silent stars are hidden in tents of home,
And the patient birds, from their nests are storm-exiled;

There's a mighty song in the world's great heart;
There's a fury of joy in its lifted soul,
When cloud kisses cloud with the lightning's dart,
Sky answering sky in the thunder's roll;

In the star-glistening night, in the green of the sod,
In the smile of the dawn, or the blue above,
The wonder that sings in the world is God,
And the flame in its heart is Love.

1920

THE DAFFODIL

A daffodil lay dying in the dust;
Some heedless hand had dropped or cast it down.
I found it, fair and fragrant, on the pavement lying,
A tender floweret in the cold dust dying.
Not on the wind-swept plain it grew,
Nor on the purple mountain;
Not in green vales by purling streams of peace;

Nor where, unconscious of its grace,
The wildflower blooms and nods,
Subtly contributing the forces of its soul
To fine evolvement of the cosmic dream;
But in its crystal home, my castaway
Drew sustenance and stature from the chemic soil.

With whispering beams, the lordly sun
Coaxed it to fair expression;
The mists and dews, the warm, enfolding air,
All made their mute, significant appeal.
The throbbing, rhythmic life transformed it
And transfigured, till matter, mould and hue,
With fragrant odours mixed in one compacted whole,
Burst into rare, gold-petaled harmony,
And lo,—the daffodil!

This green, cylindric stem, this shrivelled spathe,
These dewy petals, golden-lipt,
With delicate breathing, tell
How for a thousand, thousand years,
The universe, with tireless zeal,
Toiled to evolve and fashion
The frail, sweet image of a daffodil;
Tell how the forest fragrances,
Refreshing breezes from the far-off hills
And starry dews that cooled the lips of night,
Made infinite appeal of self-abandonment
To all the forbears of this flower,
Won them to dreams of opulence
And turned their hearts to beauty.

All this the flower told me
While I, upon the highway faring,
Held my treasure in my hand;

But since the stem severed its hold on life,
Shall I proclaim it dead,
And, moaning "dust to dust,"
Commit to earth again?
There is no death, but ceaseless resurrection
To entrancing scores of unimagined harmonies.
Within my heart the daffodil still dwells.
I send it forth to every child-wise soul,
To every seer who dreams fair dreams with me.

1911

BREEZE AND BILLOW

A fair blue sky,
A far blue sea,
Breeze o'er the billows blowing!
The deeps of night o'er the waters free
With mute appeal to the soul of me
In billows and breezes flowing;

The stars that watch
While sunbeams sleep,
Breeze o'er the billows blowing!
The soft-winged zephyrs that move the deep
And rock my barque in a dreamy sweep;
The moonlight softly glowing;

The glint of wave,
The gleam of star,
Breeze o'er the billows blowing!
The surf-line cadence of beach and bar,
The voice of nature near and far,
The night into morning growing,

And I afloat
With canvas free,
Breeze o'er the billows blowing!
At one with the heart of eternity,
The fair blue sky and the far blue sea,
And the breeze o'er the billows blowing.

1912

AUGUST

The languorous air and the hazy light
Are spread o'er the face of field and height.

A sultry noon sends a fleece afloat
On a sea of blue, like an airy boat.

The cattle stand in the sluggard stream;
The maples sleep and the rushes dream.

The wagon creaks with its weight of gold
Till the bulging barn its wealth shall hold.

The quiet hours of the evening bring
To the ear the chirr of the cricket's wing,

And faith still holds in the heart's own bower
The joy of youth's fragrant passion-flower,

And I know by the lovely far away
Soft summer glow, 'tis an August day.

1920

THE FREESIA FLOWER

Have you heard the tiny trumpets
That the little freesias blow
When the whimsies of the winter
Toss in whirlwinds of the snow?

Only pure and gentle spirits
  Can the dainty music hear
When the freesia blows her trumpets
  In the morning of the year;

But the faint and dulcet voices
  Drifting to the heavens above
Murmur with harmonious gladness
  Raptures of a lyric love;

And their breath is rich as Eden,
  Making all the flowery air
Like a summer in a forest
  Or the incense of a prayer.

1921

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Weird armies wave their scimitars of light,
  And sabres glimmer in the cloudless deep
  While up the ebon battlements they sweep
With shimmering steel exultant to the fight.
They charge, contend, retreat with sudden flight,
  Then press again the battle up the steep,
  Till all the northern skies with lances leap
Around the flaming coronal of night.

But soon the legions and their splendours fade;
  Each bright battalion in the lofty arch
In midnight's scabbard sheathes its blood-hued
    blade;
  The ranks from zenith to horizon march,
And where was camp and panoply of Mars
Is sable night pierced by the jewelled stars.

1910

MORNING GLORIES

Blue at the border,
  Then purple and white,
From trellis of green
  You turn to the light
Bells of bright splendour,
  Hearts touched with dew;
What message from God
  Do you bring? If I knew,

Resting in pathways
  Of purpose and duty,
Should I bask in the joy
  Of your exquisite beauty,
Or, hearing your story,
  Forget your adorning
And open like you
  My eyes to the morning?

1921

APRIL

Now, April, slyly, to the dream-faced Year,
  Tiptoes with mischief in her laughing eyes,
    And sprinkles showers upon his frosty form
    To wake him gaily with her mimic storm,
  Or blows some vagrant snowflakes o'er his skies.

The drowsy Year wakes from his web of dreams,
  Rubs eyes and yawns and limbers out his form,
    While bird-songs drown the nocturn of the stars;
    Blue rifts break smiling through the silver bars,
  And crystal streams reflect the sunlight warm.

The snowdrifts turn their whiteness into tears;
Earth weeps in sunshine, laughs in fitful showers,
Doffs all her stately ermine robes of snow,
Bids them again to Thule's stormland go,
And gowns herself in grass and simple flowers.
1912

ON BEACON HILL

The western fires are fading to their embers,
The purples change to gray;
As summers fade into their bleak Novembers,
So dies the light of day.

This evening yon Olympic rifts are covered
With snow-lines just the same
As when the white drifts on the high lands hovered
Before Vancouver came.

Long ere our fathers found these peaks defiant—
This land of vast surmise;
Its forests with each huge, storm-crested giant
Stood signalling the skies.

From all those waiting years—those silent pages
Of Universal Thought,
The mighty purpose of unmeasured ages
Was into being wrought.

August Dominion, robed in sapphire glory,
Beneath thy skies we bow,
And pray that all thy sons, in deed and story,
May be as great as thou!
1910

THE ARTIST

The greatest artist in the range of time
  Is Nature. All the boast of Babylon,
  The pomp of Nineveh, the pride of On,
The ravages of Rome, the brutal crime
Of every warrior host, her hand sublime
  Has hidden under lotus leaves and gone,
  Leaving the place to the unveiling dawn
And music of the bells at morning chime.

The light that runs unswerving down the sky
  Shall not evade its bright unbending track,
  Nor turn its silver feet of beauty back
Till every demon ugliness shall die.
  The hand of Nature points us to a goal
  Of joy and strength transfiguring the soul.

1923

THE ORIOLE

Sing, Oriole, bright summer bringing;
Outflung like a spark from the ringing
  Red forge of the sun, or a rocket
That soars star-illumined, and springing
  Back homeward to run to the pocket
That hides a young joy-brood a-swinging
  Like faces love-hid in a locket.

Through sunbeams you blaze in your highway,—
  Wing-lifted and bosom auroral—
    Giving briefest life to the hours;
While down your blue, zephyred sky-way,
    Through atmosphere fragrant with flowers,
  Your warblings in sunniest choral
    Emparadise woodlands and bowers.

1915

WING OF THE WILD-BIRD

Oh for the wing of the wild-bird,
Daring and dauntless and free,
The silence and scent of the forest,
The breath of the hills and the sea.

Down the dim shores of dream-islands,
On through the ocean of blue,
To fly with a comrade, a lover,
A soul that is always true.

Oh for a rest where the star-gleams
Keep with the darkness a truce
In shades of the evergreen pine-tree
Or groves of the odorous spruce.

Slumbering 'mid spacious horizons
Under the sentinel stars,
Breathing the balm of the balsams,
The fragrance of deodars;

Waking to see o'er the hilltops,
Daylight's fair banners unfurled
When morning comes flinging her glories
Up the round sweep of the world.

Then under splendid cloud-arches,
Up the vast reaches of sky,
Pinion to pinion wide-soaring,
My comrade-lover and I,

Far on the wing of the wild-bird
Daring and dauntless would flee,
Inhaling the air of the mountain,
The scent of the infinite sea.

1907

THE CANARY

I sing to the sunbeams that glance
And dance in their music of mirth;
I warble thanksgiving; I'm living
In praise of the beauty of earth,—
Of shadows in sunshine that glisten
On apple blossoms in May;
Of amethyst mountains that listen
Against their blue backgrounds of day;
Of fragrance of woods
And the hush of their whispering deeps,
Of the stream that flashes in light,
Then settles to stillness and sleeps
In the shadowy caverns of night.

Deem not this prison my home;
I roam where the crested wave
Sinks into the bowl of the billow,
The pillow of moonbeams. The Cave
Of the Winds I know,
And far to the summer seas I go.
On viewless wings of memory gliding,
I sail, a glad new comer,
Where shy young flowers
In dark leaves hiding,
Blush deeply, in love with the summer.
I drift o'er the sea to its musical shores;
I mingle with zephyrs that fan the Azores.

The sunlight up yonder
With pencils of wonder
Is painting the forest—
Its beauty is mine;
I claim all the grace
Of the palm and the pine.

In the orchard I sing,
In the heavens I soar,
The sky is my ceiling,
The meadow my floor.
You toil and you drudge
And grumble all day;
I'd scorn to exist
In your pitiful way:
A slave to suspicion,
To cares and to me,
While mine is the joy of the world—
I am free!

1919

THE ROSE

While earth was sleeping in the opal dawn
She dreamed of beauty, for a presence bright
Laid on her breast a rose, but in the light
She wakened and her angel guest had gone.

Then softly o'er her senses like a prayer,
A perfume drifted, known in Paradise,
An incense of Love's holiest sacrifice—
An evanescent fragrance, rich and rare.

O Loveliness, too soon to disappear,
The wildering grace that wraps the rose's heart
Is still the ultimate despair of art—
A pearl that, vanishing, leaves but a tear.

These petals shame mortality and blight;
Their beauty lustres Love's most transient thought,
What though our earthly senses have but caught
One touch of crimson on the wing of night.

1922

SUNSET IN SCARBORO'

The world is swinging nightwards; 'tis October
And twilight's on the heights;
The Bluffs like silent sentries gray and sober
Stand lonely in the fading evening lights.

As down the sky the sovereign sunlight marches
And grays to crimsons turn,
The bannered rays gleam through the western arches
And tongues of fire clear through the cloud-rifts burn.

The ruddy glow of gold and coral splendour
Bursts o'er the hills in light;
Bright Phœbus backward looks with glances tender
And smiling kindly beckons us good-night.

Like levelled lances in some knightly story,
Or daylight's purple pyre,
The red reflection of the vesper glory
Clothes all the west in garniture of fire.

Soon fades the wondrous pageant insubstantial;
Vermilions turn to gray—
The silent whisper of that rest-evangel
Whose slumber steals our burdens all away.

Now dips the sun's red rim beneath the land-line,
Now fades the glowing light;
No more the western hills are robed in sunshine,
Upon the heights of Scarboro' 'tis night.

1906

THE SPARROW

A little meal of frozen cake,
  A little drink of snow,
And when the sun is setting,
  A broad-eaved bungalow.

A little hopping in the sun
  Through all the wintry day,
A little chirping blithely
  Till March drifts into May.

A little creature's simple life
  And Love, its life to keep,
That careth for the sparrow
  Even when it falls asleep.

1916

AT DOON

The lustre of a tranquil autumn day
  Reigned o'er the quiet land. Here was a throne
  Of hills that rose amid a farther zone
Pushed back against the sky as if to stay
Its fleecy towers. Within that circle lay
  A vast serenity, majestic, lone,
  Where Beauty in her loveliness is shown
In Nature's spacious, far-expanding way.

The spirit of these ancient solitudes,
  Haunting the shadows with a wraith of dreams,
Finds here a lover of her towering moods,
  Who paints in pigments of the sunlight's beams
The soul's bright vision of the dawn and noon
Beneath the forests on the hills of Doon.

1920

DREAM LAND

When evening folds her tent of day
  And camps behind the hills,
In reverie I soar away,
  Mindless of earthly ills.

Far up the summerlands of sky
  On phantom wing I soar
To where my eerie castles lie
  Along the Dream Land shore.

The cloud-veils out of sunsets made
  With fringes silver-white
Blush rosily, then softly fade
  Into the jewelled night.

I fold the drapery of the stars
  My blissful fields about,
And with oblivion's restful bars
  Shut worry-demons out.

While there upon the open height
  Beneath the stars I lie,
My tent the all-revealing night,
  My cabin roof, the sky;

Out of the east at my desire,
  Aurora's radiant car
With steeds of flame and wheels of fire
  Bedims the morning star.

The southern landscapes glow and gleam
  Like fairyland for me;
Through verdant glades a mystic stream
  Flows winding to the sea.

I clothe the north with fragrant woods
And court their dreamy shades,
Or find the measure of my moods
In mossy everglades.

In storm I sweep along the deep
My dream-dominions o'er,
From craggy steep my torrents leap
And down their cañons roar.

'Tis day or darkness as I will
Among my hills of peace,
And when I bid the storms be still
The winds and thunders cease.

I revel in the sunbeams bright
That gild my dream-land towers,
Or hide with veils of misty light
The beauty of my bowers.

The warblers sing, the thrushes shake
The air and fill the skies,
And flower fragrances awake
To June of Paradise.

No wars alarm, no creeds divide,
No tyrannies appal,
No subtle cruelties abide
In my Dream Land at all.

I sail through love-illumined seas
To every sunlit goal
That could my vagrant fancy please—
The port is my own soul!

1910

AUTUMN ON THE HUMBER

A whispering woodland and a gray autumn sky;
The stream far below deep in slumber;
An oak that sentinels the peak, lifting high
Gnarlèd hands that play a tune
Like a softly singing rune;
Misty morning to high noon
Mounting on her wings of light o'er the Humber.

The leaves are fallen from the trees on the height
That stands almost sheer, brown and sombre;
November's frosty light
Spreads a gauzy film of white
And I almost hear the faeries
In their golden sanctuaries—
In the stillness of the autumn by the Humber.

1919

THE WONDER-STAR

Now brightly in the soft-eyed southern skies,
Between Aquarius and the Hunter's feet,
Above where earth and heaven in shadow meet,
Mira, the star of ancient mystery, lies.
But while we gaze in eloquent surprise,
Her blaze of transient splendour all too fleet
Fades from our vision and no more we greet
The image of an ever vast surmise.

O Star of Wonder! thine elusive light,
A fitting emblem of all human fame,
Burns with meridian beauty in our sight,
Then fades to dreams of splendour and—a name.
Thus for a day man's glory gleams afar,
Then dims to darkness like the wonder-star.

1906

JULY

A white cloud-sail in a sea of blue,
The splendours of the day,
A meadow drenched with the diamond dew
And the air with new-mown hay;
A lazy brook through a green vale flowing
And never a breeze astir,
A sun-kist flower by the wayside blowing,
A swallow's wing awhir,—
This is July of the bountiful heat,
Month of wild roses and berries and wheat.

1915

JUNE WHISPERS

I stand again where, often,
I stood in other years,
June gladness in my heart,
Cricket music in my ears.
The earth and sky are teaming
With caravels sublime—
The fragrances of nature,
The silences of time.

Deep in their midnight arches
The stars watch clear and true,
The green things in earth-gardens
Are drinking in the dew.
The blossoms are exhaling
Their perfumes of delight;
The hand of God is resting
On the pillow of the night.

1923

THE PINES

I steal apart
To the woodland's heart
When the work of the day is over,
And odours sweet
Of the forest meet
The scent of the blooming clover.

I sit and rest
By the breeze caressed
With the stately pine trees o'er me,
The wind-harp's sigh
In the branches high
And the open sea before me.

The golden light
And the ink of night
With the blue of the sky are blended
In the leaves so fine
Of the evergreen pine,
In its beauty so dark and splendid.

When every light
In the vault of night
Is trembling with deep emotion,
And a great bright line
Of white moonshine
Runs shimmering up the ocean,

I sit and rest
By the breeze caressed
With the stately pine trees o'er me,
The wind-harp's sigh
In the branches high
And the open sea before me.

1906

THE HERMIT THRUSH

Hark! the rich tones of a wondrous tune
Come up from the brakes,
Stirring the coverts of Canada's June
And gladdening the Lakes;
Tones of a passionate, joy-laden heart
Whose fervid desire
Springs from the ultimate fountain of art,
Intense as a fire;
How each exultant, clear ecstasy-note,
In melodious rush,
Bursts from the song-mad, silvery throat
Of the hermit thrush!

Sweetest of songsters, soul evermore
Of the joy-breathing throng,
Opening to heaven, unwearied, the door
Of tumultuous song;
Filling the silences far from the ways
Of self-seeking men,
With billowy outbursts of turbulent praise
From stream and from glen;
Here is no heart-rending sorrow that sobs
In tear-freighted lay;
Thine is a music that vibrates and throbs
With the gladness of day.

When thou dost sing, O jubilant bird,
Thy music intense
Seemeth far sweeter than heaven hath heard,
To spirit and sense.
What is the wondrous source of the dream
That mellows thy voice?
Where is the sun and soul of the gleam
That bids thee rejoice,

Making thy song like an iris of fire,
By some angel hand
Flung from a rainbow,—an exquisite lyre
From the spirit-land?

1916

THE LONG LOOK

There's a nook in the hills where the green vines creep
Over rock and roof and tree;
From a lofty ledge the waters leap
To foam in a silver sea.

The white-winged eagle circles far
From her eyry-crag aloof;
Her nest is out on a jutting spar
And safe from the wild goat's hoof.

The jack-pines dream on the sloping height,
And a tent of blue is spread
Over misty billows fleecy white
That halo the mountain's head.

I revel there in the long, long look
Through vistas of vesper light,
And wait with a thrill in my mountain nook
My star-eyed sister Night.

1921

THE GOLDEN LOOM

When dark clouds ravel out the sun
And usher in an ashen gloom,
Weave for yourself a brighter one
With friendship's golden loom.

1923

THE TOBOGGAN

This is the queen of the hills! All Canada thrills
At the thought of a speed that is almost flight
O'er the elfin mead in the pale moonlight,
As she curves away like a shooting star
Down, down to the snowy fields afar
Through the heart of the mighty hills.

Shouts on the merry hillside! Ah, here is a tide
Of the veriest glee that ever was heard;
The roll of the sea or the flight of a bird
Is tame in the wake of those wilder joys
That spring from the throats of girls and boys
On the vivid toboggan slide.

Now, like an arrowy gleam, the soul of a dream,
She stands at the word of the captain's will
Like a tempest bird on her topmost hill;
All hands are eager, all eyes alight,
Faces are rosy and spirits bright,
In the glance of the moon's pale beam.

Pause they a moment—a hush, now steersman, a push!
And she starts for the plain with one foot to guide,
As a chip that has lain on the stream might ride
When over Niagara's brow it curved
And plunged to the rapids below, unswerved
From the line of its downward rush.

Suddenly, air that was still is a gale on the hill!
All the stars, the wide sky, and the fields besides,
In their mad sweep by are as moving tides;
Even thought is too slow to keep the pace
And lags in the swift toboggan race
Down the long Canadian hill.

On sails the skiff of the snow! The maples below
Are uprising in air while the snow they crush
As onward they bear in their downward rush.
A mile a minute? Oh, that were to crawl;
They never could win in the race at all
Did they not more speedily go.

Slackens the speed of the bird not enough for a word
Or a thought of all this—the flight or the fall—
Unless one would miss the feel of it all,
The sense of the boundless strength of the hills,
The answering shout of the heart that thrills
When the winter's trumpet is heard.

Over hill-terraces vast, our caravel fast—
Like the redman's canoe on St. Laurent's tide,
When it runs the Long Sault—doth buoyantly glide;
Careering apace to the valleys of snow,
The wide-spreading everglades farther below,
The everglades, eerie and vast.

Out on the valley, indeed, somewhat lessens her speed;
Yet she skims o'er the ice of the open pond,
And glides in a trice to the fields beyond;
Goes drifting out where the shadows play
With the moonbeams white, and far away
Till weary, she rests in the mead.

Up to the snow-peak afar is a path to the star,
For there o'er the hill is Jupiter bright,
Majestic and still, the prince of the night;
And the long upward path to the hilltop's verge
Is taken with courage that needs no urge—
The long rising road to the star.

Oh what a picturesque folk! moccasin, jersey and
toque;
And they love to climb, since climbing is art,
For life is a hill both to mind and heart,
And jewels of night gem the heavens so clear,
While they climb the height in many-hued gear
Of moccasin, jersey and toque.

All hail to the queen of the hills! The heart wildly
thrills
At the thought of a speed that is almost flight,
O'er the elfin mead in the pale moonlight,
And greater the music of life by far
When we climb the sacred road to the star
In Love's mighty heart of the hills.

1914

TWILIGHT

In the cool wonder-gleam of the evening,
In the soft aureole of the light,
When the azure dies
And the emerald skies
Fade into the myriad night;

When I sit in the tower of shadows,
In the dream-time of day that is done,
And the isles of mist
By the daylight kist
Are blushing adieux to the sun;

When the stars are beginning to twinkle
And the dew-breath is sweet from afar,
The earth-spirit sings
And all animate things
One kindred, one brotherhood are.

1914

EVANGELINE

Dream of the golden day, wild wings a-flying,
Voices from far away, faint echoes dying;
Gleam of the waters bright
Jewelled with islands,
Glow of the mystic light
Flaming the highlands;
Wigwam and caribou,
Paddle and birch canoe
And twilight hour with you,
Evangeline.

Birds of the morn sail by, their song-hearts bursting,
So too my soul would fly, for beauty thirsting.
For nature's touch I yearn,
The springing fountain,
The marsh-reed and the fern,
The shining mountain,
Where banishment of care
Makes every breath a prayer,
And ever thou art there,
Evangeline.

Airily down the dark, music comes streaming,
And drifting in my bark, ecstasies dreaming,
There comes to me again
From early childhood
A sweetly weird refrain
Out of the wildwood.
Deep in their own deep sky
The clear-eyed stars sail by
While we our paddles ply,
Evangeline.

1908

THE VIOLET

Loveliness and wonder met
In the peerless violet,
Peeping from the earth's green sod
To adorn the gown of God.
All the graces of the flowers,
By a kind caressing hand
Gathered through unnumbered hours
From the gardens of the land,
If compressed into a sweet
Incense to anoint Love's feet,
Could not match the fragrance yet
Of one breathing violet.

1923

MAY

This is the full crescendo of the world,
The riot of the happy birds a-wing,
The anthem of green things divinely mad,
An orchestra vociferously glad
While nature's voices all with joyance ring.

Feel all the meaning of the mighty march,
The chorus of the wild, sweet nature throng,
And add the beauty of this wondrous morn
To memories of a score of Mays reborn
Filling your soul with the stupendous song.

All portals open; break all barriers down;
Enrich your heart with life's intenser day,
Till out of nature's elemental score,
Great cosmic organ-harmonies shall pour
To thrill your soul with God's triumphant May.

1911

THE FISHERS

Where the fishers, rocking, resting,
Or anon the billows breasting,
  Feel the pathos of the ocean,
  Tossing with a constant motion,
    On the tossing sea;

Tang of rhythmic tides inbreathing,
Spume of surges foaming, seething;
  Mists that rise to woo the star-drifts
  In the clear blue of the cloud-rifts
    O'er the mighty sea.

Whether going forth or homing,
In the midnight or the gloaming,
  Drawing in the spacious gladness
  Of the sunshine, or the sadness
    Of the boundless sea;

One they are with all surrounding,
With the angry surf resounding
  From the far-off coasts and shallows,
  One with all that makes and hallows
    Memories of the sea.

Lonely dwellers on the ocean,
Evermore your fine devotion
  Lives, in all your sons abiding,
  Leavening their souls and guiding
    O'er life's fitful sea.

All the ocean's moods and tenses,
Verve and whims and subtle senses,
  All its deafening boom and thunder,
  All the terror, gloom and wonder
    Of the stormful sea;

All the restless moaning, drifting
Mists and shadows, cloud-forms shifting,
  Heaving waters, vast, unbounded,
  Deep, mysterious, unsounded,
    Of the changeful sea,

Builded into soul and sinew
Of the fishers, soothe and win you
  With their patience and their power
  Born of changeful sun and shower
    On the wind-swept sea.

In our nation's many races,
May we never miss the traces
  Of the vastness and the wonder,
  And the deafening storm and thunder
    Of the open sea.

1906

THE BELLS OF KOBIA

The bells of Kobia softly ring
  On the porch where flowers are climbing;
The branches in the breezes swing
While little faeries dance and sing
  To the music of their chiming.

The bells of Kobia sweetly ring
  When dews at sunrise glisten;
But none may hear the rapturous thing
When Beauty spreads her purple wing
  But those who stoop to listen.

The bells of Kobia still shall ring
  Their ever-haunting measures
Till memory to their shrine shall bring
Upon the Æther's dainty wing
  The incense of her treasures.

1921

OCTOBER

The year swings onward. Now the fairy sods
  Glisten with frosty dew and on the path
  Dead leaves are fallen. In mirth of mimic wrath
The hawthorn shakes his spears. The four wind-gods
Blow lustily and from the milk-weed pods
  Seed-arrows scatter in an aftermath
  Of feathered wings that drift into a bath
Of sunlight over withered golden-rods.

October, many wholesome pleasures fill
  Thy tranquil hours—south-going wings a-whir,
  The moist brown chestnut bursting from its burr,
The golden pumpkins dotted o'er the hill,
  Those ingle hours that only autumn knows,
  And apple incense richer than the rose.

1911

VISTAS OF THE NORTH

Mackenzie's silent waters northward roll
  Where stately cliffs to sun-crowned ramparts rise,
  Weird palisades that pierce the Arctic skies
And guide the mighty river to its goal.
In that defiant sea that guards the Pole,
  The long unconquered heart of mystery lies,
  Whence Man imperious turns subdued or dies
Triumphant in the onrush of his soul.

Where midnight suns fling out their level rays
  Across the ice-fields of the Boreal nights,
  Where noonday stars and dancing Northern Lights
Flood with their glory all the Arctic ways,
  Mackenzie pours its mighty waters forth
  Into the solemn vistas of the North.

1911

THE TOBICO

Behind the hill near the old saw-mill
Where the quiet waters flow,
Where the school-boys swim when the light is dim,
We played long years ago;
And I often dream of that winding stream
Where the long-leaved rushes grow,
Of the worms in a tin that we stuck on a pin
To fish in the Tobico.

When school was out, with a leap and a shout
We rushed to the river's side,
And all the boys with a merry noise
Plunged into its cooling tide;
We swam elate 'neath the old swing-gate
Where the geese to the pastures go,
Or sprang from the bank and merrily sank
With a splash in the Tobico.

When the sunset flame and the twilight came
We lay at the streamlet's edge
While the whip-poor-will sang loud and shrill
And the frog croaked in the sedge;
The tune so sharp of the cricket's harp
Rang out while we whispered low
As we lay on the ground and heard the sound
Of the rippling Tobico.

The snow-banks white in the pale moonlight
Still stand out keen and clear
And the friendly haze of those olden days
Is yet to my memory dear;
I linger still by the ice-bound rill
Where we skated long ago
In the clear starlight of the winter night
On the "Little Tobico."

1906

NIAGARA FALLS

A thousand streams all gather into one
And in thy thunders sink;
Four mighty seas to thy dread margin run
And dare thine awful brink.

The shock of cavalry in battle sweep,
The might of war's impact,
Are whispers to the thunder o'er the steep
Of thy great cataract.

While yet there was no ear to hear thy moan
And all the earth was young,
Out on the lonely air thy monotone
Its deep vibrations flung.

The sun was painting rainbows on the mist
That veiled thy watery crown
When fierce Cambyses staggered all the east
And trampled Egypt down.

Still boomed thy flood in ceaseless cannonade
And seethed in yeasty foam
When Goth and Vandal in destruction laid
The towers of ancient Rome.

Thy torrent breaks the adamantine rock
And hurls it from the height;
The firm-knit earth cannot withstand the shock
Of thy propulsive might.

How wild the storm that ever downward sweeps
The whirlwind of thy foam;
How still the sky that all thy waters weeps
In raindrops from its dome.

Sublime but silent is that mighty force
That dwells within those forms
Whose wings of mist soar upward in their course
And veil thy breast in storms.

1907

MOUNTAIN MUSIC

There is music in the mountains,
There are carols in the sky;
Silver wings are floating o'er us,
But they sail so silent by
That we seldom see or hear those
White-winged songsters of the sky.

We shall hear the mellow cadence
Of a music sweet and true
When we spread imagination
Like a net across the blue,
And we push the blinding earth-veils
From our hearts and see things true.

There are bell-tones in the mountains,
There are trumpets in the sky;
Hear the bugles softly blowing
Serenade and lullaby:
All the sweet and silvery music
Of the singers of the sky.

1921

NIGHT IN JUNE

The stars are drifting down the west
And night and silence woo to rest.

The world is fragrant, clear and bright
This peerless, leafy, glad June night.

And all's so silent in the street
I almost hear the rhythmic beat

Of worlds that swing in solemn sway
Along their radiant starlit way,

Where suns and planets stately march
Ablaze athwart the gleaming arch.

The sentry moon with silvery beam
Glides softly down the stellar stream.

With Beauty on her perfect throne
Her kingdom needs no voice or tone.

The winds are dumb, the waters rest,
The clouds in quiet moonlight drest

Lie slumbering in the lower skies
Where moonbeams fade and starlight dies.

Oh, earth is sweeter than we knew
With starry frankincense of dew.

1907

LYRIC NIGHT

I spread a snare electric across the ether streams
To catch the dream enchantment with which the darkness teems;
Then down the ancient silence, like zephyrs through the wheat,
The truant tones come drifting melodious and sweet,
For all the heavens are freighted with inspiration-light;
The skies are raining music out of the lyric night.

1923

MY GODDESS

Dawn steals with golden veil along the eastern skies,
And with her garish state hides distance from our eyes.

The goddess of the night lays off her starry gown
To walk awhile unseen through wood and field and town;

And in the sun's parade my heart is home-sick quite
Longing and lonely for the far eternal light.

So, while the noise of day across the green earth runs,
I hold my constant dream of twice ten thousand suns,

And leaning from the light to press my wistful lips
With lingering tenderness upon Night's finger-tips,

I watch the westering sun go down beneath the line
Till star-eyes softly beaming smile shyly into mine.

With blue, or gold, or green, or lustrous purple dight,
Your eyes are pure and kind and true, my Goddess, Night.

1922

THE SAGUENAY

Foams thy torrent, Saguenay,
Down its dark abysmal way;
Pluto's river, stream unique,
Pent in crag-line, cliff and peak.

'Twas no fearsome weird phantasm
Blasted out that awful chasm
Where above all human reach
Yawns the hollow of La Niche.

No grim monster of the height
From the spacious womb of night
Smote the highlands till they broke
With the fury of his stroke.

'Twas no wild, relentless force
Grooved the mountains for thy course;
'Twas no giant of the cave
Cleared a channel for thy wave.

But the strong right hand of God
Smote them with volcanic rod,
When His power deep thereunder
Broke the earth's rock-robes asunder;

Bade the waters pass in state
Through that mighty river gate
Where the capes like sentries rise
To the blue wide-arching skies.

Bade the waters of St. John,
Rush impetuously on
To the sea-tides rolling back
From the shores of Tadousac.

It was Love benign, intense,
Burst into that rude defense,
Tore earth's granite robes apart,
Cooled her fever-heated heart.

Lifted to the radiant sky
Corridors of rock so high
As to fill the reverent breast
With a sense of might and rest.

1907

THE MYRTLE

Little blue flower of the myrtle,
Loveliness dew-impearled;
Beauty I find,
But nowhere combined
So sweetly with rest, or so wholly refined;
Emblem thou art
Of the lowly heart
And of Love, the joy of the world.

1916

WEARY

I'm weary of the markets,
Of walls and towers high;
I long for open spaces;
I want to see the sky.

Oh, take me where the breezes
Across the moorlands sweep
The fragrance of the forest,
The odours of the deep.

I'm weary of the noises
That desecrate the day;
I'm homesick for the stillness
Of hillsides far away,

Where, 'mid the mighty silences
Of nature, I should be
Companion of the mountain
And comrade of the sea.

1911

SNOW-LILIES

Along the shore where night and storm impassioned
Are hushed to stillness by the sun's decree,
The eddying waters icy rings have fashioned
Like coral circles in a southern sea.

Upon these breathing waters, gently floating
And mirrored clearly in the deeps below,
Each crown is gleaming in a hoar-frost coating,
A fairy wreath tipped with its jewelled snow.

You veil of soft white mist is shining clearer
Where in the lake it answers to the skies,
As Love eternal truer seems and dearer
When seen by lover in a lover's eyes.

The winter morn unfolds in frosty splendour
And all the forms of earth to beauty wake,
The trees with drooping branches bare and slender,
The fair snow-lilies floating on the lake.

1912

JUNE MORNING

Such fragrant air, how could I breathe yet sleep?
How could I hear the tuneful graybird sing,
Chanting his sweet and simple ancient rune,
How could I hear the choristers of June
Their joy to gem the lingering silence bring,
Yet in the Lethean stream my senses steep?

With breathings of a joy more sweet than sound;
Some far-off Pisgah dream, my soul athirst
Doth realize in this June-dawn delight.
The lilacs clustered yonder, purple, white,
Challenge a rival sense. The violets burst
Out of the fragrant summer lands around

The eye hath with the ear an equal boon;
  The restful blue above the varied scene,
    The flowers and forests and bright-plumaged
      birds
    Beggar the lips with poverty of words
  To paint the spreading hillsides far and green
When all I see and hear and breathe is June.
1912

TORONTO

Far o'er this wide-spread plain whose fertile land
  Was once abandoned by an ancient sea,
  The stalwart Saxon resolute and free
With clear prevision bade a city stand.
Obedient to his eager soul's demand,
  These towers and temples rose, henceforth to be
  Time's fingers pointing to eternity,
By flaming thunders swept, by breezes fanned.

Toronto, now your ancient billows sleep,
  But streams of life enrich your festive halls;
In love and death behold a vaster deep
  Where heart to heart across life's ocean calls;
A thousand eyes within your homes may weep,
  But Love is king within ten thousand walls.
1913

QUEBEC

Here cosmic floods and forces all conspire
  To call the earnest soul to life sincere;
  The silence thunders in the open ear
The diapason of a world's desire
To greet the Infinite. In mists of fire,
  The terrene storm-gods wracked the seething
    sphere,
  The splintered mountain rose in bold frontier,
A vestige of the old Plutonic pyre.

Lo, heroes, heroes meet in battle shock
And gaze on death firm as this ancient rock!
Quebec doth wake the world this fateful morn,
Far o'er the plains is heard the echoing horn;
Behold the soil, the seed, the rising sun,
The tears, the toil, and our Dominion one!

1909

THE LONELY PINE

Lonely and lofty, the mountain pine
Gracefully formed and fashioned,
Kist by the wind-gods' lips divine
Breathing their love impassioned,

Queenliest soul of the green-robed race,
Ever singing and sighing,
Dreeing her weird to the voids of space
Where young Æolus is dying,

Beaten by flails of the winter rain,
Bending but still defiant,
Lithe and resilient to shock and strain,
Reckless of storm-breathing giant,

Proud and stately, fairest of all,
One with the heart of the thunder,
Loved by the poets, sombrely tall,
Harp of the winds of wonder!

1910

THE BALSAM PILLOW

The summer suns and winter silences
Waft from afar their woodland fragrances—
This frankincense of forest dreams.

1924

ROSSMOYNE

To Lorne A. Pierce

Vestured in gauzy mists and purple vapours—
God's peerless altar pyre—
Too soon the sun gives place to starry tapers,
Sheathing his blades of fire.

The bulwarks and the bastions of the thunder
Smile golden in the light;
The woods and waters blush to tints of wonder
Burning in beauty bright.

The mystic silences are windows lifting
Their blinds into the blue,
That so, the light of the Eternal drifting,
May pass unhindered through.

The Lakes that with their amethystine splendour
Reflect the saffron skies,
Caress the island shores with ripples tender:
Day in the distance dies.

But Nature's glowing sheen and iridescence
That stream and starlight lend
Bring fullest joy in the soul-thrilling presence
Of one unfailing friend.

1923

THE COMET

Spectral, mysterious, flame-like thing
Cleaving the western night.
Waking from chrysalis-dream to fling
Out of your spirit's long chastening
Far-flashing streams of light.

Tell us your thought of the things that are;
How does the morning sing?
What have you seen in the worlds afar?
Tell us your dream, O silvery star,
Bird with the white flame-wing.

What though the glow of your fading ray
Dim and elusive seem,
Constant you are to the sun's bright sway,
Faithful and true in your tireless way,
True in your spectral gleam.

Rising anew from your ancient pyre,
Vapour and dust your frame,
Still you are Psyche, the soul's desire,
Wingless save when in reefs of fire
Mounting in shafts of flame.

1913

A LITANY OF LOVE

A LITANY OF LOVE

LOVE'S BIRTHDAY

Sweet day, sun-born, dew-kist,
Noontide of gold
And sunset amethyst,
Shades that enfold
The whispering light,
Hushed, star-eyed night—
'Twas such a day as this,
With glory-morn,
When, out of viewless bliss,
You, Love, were born.

Night's sun-expectant hush,
Earth's wonder-dawn,
Shy daybreak's beauty-blush,
The shadows gone;
All are bedight
With joy-thrilled light,
Nor is it strange, I wis,
This rare, sweet morn,
That on a day like this,
You, Love, were born.

1911

BLUE EYES

Love eternal, when He planned
  Fronded fern and forest tree,
Laid His meadows on the land,
  Floated cloud-reefs o'er the sea,
Dreamed the wonder of your eyes
In the arches of the skies.

All the purport of your powers,
  Love, the great Adventurer knew,
When He reared His granite towers,
  Leaning stairs up to the blue,
Spreading o'er each lonely crest
Snowy coverlets of rest.

When of old the singing spheres
  Waked the young earth with their strain,
Long ere yet the tidal years
  Soothed it with the gentle rain,
These were heralds of your voice
Bidding earth and heaven rejoice.

All the mountain crags were flung
  To yon summits where they lie,
And the trembling stars were swung
  In their hammocks of the sky,
So that you might be as they,
Faithful to eternal day.

Love the Beautiful has made
  Daisied fields with ferns and flowers,
Stars and suns that never fade,
  Built a home for Love like ours;
But He matched the sapphire skies
With the wonder of your eyes.

1918

MY STAR

Out in the lone night's moonless marge,
One star, not greatly bright or large,
  Bends down to me and smiles afar—
                My star.
One tree that morn with music fills
Swings out its strong arms to the hills,
  And beckons, as it seems, to me—
                My tree.
And oft in dreams, before my eyes,
The walls of a sweet home arise,
  A lowly cot beside the foam—
                My home.
And far, oh, very far away,
One soul shall come to me some day,
  One heart shall yearn for human love—
                My love.
And some day, by the mystic sea,
Beneath my star, near my lone tree,
  Dear heart, my happy home shall be—
                With thee.

1911

THE LILY

Emblem of beauty and sorrow,
Twine with each wistful to-morrow
  The past with its memories teeming
  And all its dear innocent dreaming.
Go thou, O lily, and o'er her cast
  The drifting breath of the wind-swept hills;
  Sing her the music of forest rills;
Whisper a dream of the sacred past;
  Lie on her heart till the angels wake
  Her deathless love for the old time's sake.

Still to that love I am turning,
Though beyond reach of my yearning;
  And never the vision shall vanish
  Nor time nor eternity banish
That dream celestial of love and tears
That still transfigures the lonely years.

Go, lily, go with my love and lie
Close to her heart and never die;
  To her with my love I bequeath you,
Fair as the glow of the golden sky
When twilight falls and the breezes sigh,
  Sweet as the bosom beneath you;
Pure as the dew on the glistening sod,
White as the snowflake, perfect as God.

1912

MEMORIES

When joy in Love's dear eyes
Kisses our own with smiles,
Comes music of sweet bells
That ringing far away,
Laugh heavens into the heart;
But when they cease,
The spacious halls of memory
Are thrilled with echoes of a love
Too strong for speech;
The dim harmonious silences
Blush to a crimson light;
Faith becomes strangely young,
Wisdom matures, and Love
Finds immortality.

1915

SHIELA

Shiela, in the crowded way
  Far from humming-bird and bee,
You are like a summer day,
  Blithe and beautiful to me.

Shiela, when from southern height
  Sloping flowery to the sea,
We together face the light
  Of the years that are to be,

In our path and purpose one,
  Soul and sense forever free,
You shall be my constant sun,
  Shiela, beautiful to me.

When the blush of youth is gone,
  You shall more than ever be,
In the great eternal dawn,
  Shiela, beautiful to me.

1921

I LOVE YOU

I love you as the angels love, Dear Heart;
I love you far beyond the dreams of art.
As radiant stars fling out their silver light
Across the spaces of the silent night,
No word they speak, and yet the stars are true
To one transcendent chord—so, I love you.

I love you as the blossom loves the day,
As tender leaves thrill to the breath of May,
As suns at twilight seek the rose-hued west,
I love you as the weary soul loves rest.
Till you my day with sunshine-presence bless,
I am but longing, love and loneliness.

1917

TWENTY

Just twenty years to-day!
But are you not that flower
That in the lotus valley grew
And only Theban maidens knew
The heaven-secluded bower?

Just twenty years to-day!
And yet I seem to hear
In gilded courts of Babylon,
In Heliopolis and On,
A thousand voices clear

Acclaim your cavalcade
That down the Tigris veers;
With young Semiramis beside,
You stately dromedaries ride
Down avenues of years.

Palmyra's jewelled light
Shone o'er your desert roads;
Atlantis in her coral arms
Held you, a child of many charms,
In her wave-swept abodes.

Dear dream-child of the past,
Joy of the years that lay
Their sleeping forms beneath the strife,
Deep-buried in the crypts of life,
Your twenty years to-day

Are myriads of years;
Your lovelier life to mould,
The ages have their largess brought
Of glorious deed and lofty thought—
Ah, you are very old.

And you will pour the urge
Of all that earlier strife
With its incalculable cost,
Its victories won, its battles lost,
Into the stream of life.

1916

ROSEBUDS

No wild thing ever blossomed on the mountain,
Or opened longing lids to greet the light,
Or kissed the moonbeams when the gentle shadows
Fell on the lips of night;
No rose that languishes in orient gardens,
Or crimsons in the valleys of the west
Could match the beauty of the rosebud opening
So sweetly on your breast.

No green leaf blushes to its autumn glory
Touched with the wizardry of wind and frost;
No leaf was ever lifted by the tempest
And in the wildwood lost,
One half so lovely as those breathing petals
Pressed by your lips and by your love caressed
Where, near your heart, they rise and fall, soft-nestled—
The rose-leaves on your breast.

Breathe rapture, and forevermore those petals—
The music of your passion, silence-shod—
Shall steal into my heart in dream to whisper
The loveliness of God.
He gave me here one rosebud of His beauty,
All redolent of joy and faith and rest,
And thrilled me with the fragrance and the wonder
Of the rose-leaves on your breast.

1919

LIEBESLIED

Each deathless star in the deep, dark sky
  Has said to me out of the night:
"I am loving you here in my home on high,
  I am loving you here in the light."

The wind that blows on my cheeks and hair
  Is singing to me this song:
"I am loving you, Dear One, out in the air,
  I am wooing you all the day long."

The grass I press in the summer heat
  Has lispèd to me this sound:
"How I love to caress your wandering feet,
  I am loving you here on the ground."

The word of the wind and the starlight clear,
  Of the meadow with dew-drops pearled,
Wheresoever I turn I can always hear,
  For Love is the Heart of the World.

1906

TOGETHER

I see your face, dear Friend,
  Beyond the mountains and across the years,
And memory lingers till the sunset hues all blend
  Their rainbow beauty in a mist of tears.

I see your radiant face
  Beyond the clouds that hide the years to come
In fields of circumstance and shadowlands of space,
  In guesses of the years and dreams of home.

I meet you in the light,
  Far, far above the marshlands of despair,
Where love eternal never glooms to sudden night
  And never sickness is. I meet you there.

More near than time or space,
  The barriers of dream all broken down,
Alone in God's great atmosphere, and face to face
  Beneath the firmament, we claim our own.
1911

THE STORM BRIDE

On a dark green hill where the forest sleeps
  'Neath the wing of a brooding sky,
The bride of the breeze, the pine tree, keeps
Her silent watch, but the music leaps
  From her throat when the winds pass by.

"Oh, I am the breeze, and I kiss thy lips,
  My bride of the eerie storm;
I drive my ships with hurricane whips;
Their grey sails bulge and each tall mast dips,
  But over thy glorious form

I bend from the skies and my love confess,—
  A sacrament all divine,
With beauty-impassioned tenderness
Thy storm-swept heart to my heart I press
  And our bodies blend like wine."

And lo! from afar, the thunders break
  To the tone of their deep desire;
In a golden flame o'er the distant peaks,
Love-luminous nature her gladness speaks,
  And the heavens salute with fire!
1920

A LOVER'S MAGNIFICAT

Flame of my soul that lifts me from the deeps,
  And spreads white wings to the blue heavens afar;
That shows me Faith's unseen abodes and sweeps
  Out to the dimmest and most distant star;
    That stands before the gateways of the sky
    The chief archangel guard of the Most High;

Whence is the power that bids me glow and sing,
  And gives me strength to climb the sun's bright
      way,
To march triumphant as an ancient king,
  A conqueror of universal day,
    With majesty of gleaming phalanx broad
    Kindling to life the shining gates of God?

Creative Love clear burning in my soul,
  Thou art the power to lift me to the height
And bear me to the everlasting goal
  Through the vast reaches of ethereal light;
    Thou art my strength, my wing, my pure desire,
    Ancient, eternal, unconsuming fire.

1920

CAMEO

No emblem that glorifies nature
  Could image your soul and its grace,
So the Lord of eternal beauty
  Has moulded the loveliest face

That ever envisaged the splendour
  Of joy in a maiden's eyes—
Your heavenly face, Belovèd,
  Love's wonder-word from the skies.

1920

THREE THUNDERS

Three thunders like drum-beats of doom,
  Three flashes of fiery gleam;
Two souls in that tempest of gloom,
  The children of dream.

He sees down the roads of her eyes
  The lanes where a great love has trod
To the beat of the song of the skies,
  The music of God.

The lash of the hurricane-whips,
  The roar of the thunder is gone;
But the joy of those dream-lovers' lips
  Is still at the dawn.

1919

EMERALDS

Mix deep in thy heart—
'Tis the alchemist's art—
And blend into one
The blue of the ocean,
The gold of the sun,
The fire of a star,
The green of the spring,
A flame of emotion;
Then set in a ring
Of perfect devotion,
And lo, these emeralds are!
And the ring? Ah, you smile;
Well, that is our secret awhile.

1917

DREAM VALLEY

I know a vale where the oriole swings
  Her nest to the breeze and the sky,
The iris opens her petal wings
  And a brooklet ripples by;
In the far blue is a cloud-drift,
  And the witch-tree dresses,
With a rare charm in the warm light,
  Her long dream-tresses.

But yestermorn—or was it a dream?
  When daisies were drinking the dew,
I wandered down by the little stream,
  And who was there but you?
Though Nature smiled with the old joy
  On the vagrant comer,
It was your voice and the wildbird's
  Were the soul of summer.

When bowed with the toils of many years,
  I would rest, if it be Love's will,
In a vale where the bird-songs to my ears
  Come floating across the hill;
With the sweet breath of the June air
  And the purple clover,
And the lone dream of the old love,
  And the blue skies over.

1916

THE LIGHT OF LOVE

Nobler than solemn organ tone
  Or earth's sublimest art,
Deeper than ocean's mystic moan,
Love sings his ancient song alone,
  The music of the heart.

All down the immemorial sweep
  Of life's immortal way,
O'er sunny height or deathly deep,
Where Love and Light their strong course keep,
  'Tis everlasting day.

Oh, Love is strong to breast the wave
  On seas of circumstance,
And Love is bold and Love is brave,
Though weeping by a lonely grave
  Upon the shores of Chance!

O vision of the cloudless eye,
  O Deep beyond the deeps!
Thine is the reach of endless sky
And thine the flaming ecstasy
  While loveless vision sleeps.

1910

RONDEAU

I speak with thee, and all is bright;
The sky is deeper blue, the night
  Is rich with song though stars are still;
  Thy thought with music doth the silence fill,
And all the firmament with light.

The clouds hang low and cold and white,
The morning air is chill despite
  The splendours of the sun, until
                I speak with thee.

But thou hast wings and ready flight
And when my thoughts with thine unite
  I mount the thronéd skies; the thrill
  Of perfect life is mine, so will
                I speak with thee.

1906

SERENADE

My soul goes out to thee in adoration;
Thy love-revealing eyes
Have lifted me from dearth and desolation
To the blue bending skies.
Thou art my bliss, and all my thought of thee
Is love and beauty and sincerity.

I worship thee and blend the pale hues tender
In which the dawn is clad—
God's beauty—with the image of thy splendour
And know that He is glad.
My soul in loving thee is praising Him
More sweetly than the choral seraphim.

The footfall of the years brief in duration,
Shall swiftly, swiftly move;
They beat the measure of our exultation,
The music of our love.
How little matters it what paths we've trod,
Since we shall walk together home to God.

1920

TO JOHN

There's one dear word that I would write
In golden letters clear and high;
I'd grave it with a stile of light
Upon the tablet of the sky;

But all the ages could not tell
Such meanings to the winds of fame
As I would eloquently spell
In those four letters of your name.

1922

FLOWER OF DAWN

I know that God is beautiful!
I see it in the sky so deep and blue,
In all things lovely, luminous and true,
And, most of all, I see, dear Heart, in you
That God is beautiful.

I know that life is wonderful!
I see it where the eagle cleaves the skies,
Or where the patient mountains sunward rise,
But most in the fine courage of your eyes
I see life wonderful.

I know the darkness breaks to dawn!
The bells of time ring out the promise new,
The poet-prophets sing its numbers too,
But I have found the fragrant flower in you,
That breathes the perfect dawn.

1922

WENONAH

(An Algonkian Legend)

WENONAH

OF the many star-myths cherished by the Algonquins, is one in which a certain star is said to have loved a beautiful Indian maiden. It shone upon her each evening ere her eyes closed in joy-refreshing sleep. One day, in the blinding light, the celestial lover lost the maiden, and for a long time could not find her again, though he sought her every day all around the world. The poem tells how the star, assuming the guise of an adventurous voyageur, finds the maiden, now to glorious womanhood grown, and how they together explore the Athabasca.

WENONAH

The Rune-Rock

Where, ever, the blue waters drift to the silent
deeps of that ocean
That rolls 'neath the star
Where Michabo dwells on an ice-floe immense
and ever in motion,
Alone and afar,

Lest, touching the earth, he should scorch and
consume it with flame of his burning,
The fire of his feet,
Overwhelming the warrior brave on the trail
of the hunter returning,
With whirlwinds of heat;

A rock once stood, abrupt by the river, assum-
ing the fashion,
In mute self-control,
Of an angel's reverent form, with deep, sub-
dued passion,
Pointing the path to the pole.

A sentinel lonely it seemed, on the bank of
the blue Athabasca,
A lure to the sea,—
The sea that rolls from the opening dawn to
the shore of Alaska,
And north to eternity.

Of old, when artless, reflective and leisurely
life was inviting
To thought, that rock-face
Was covered with runes, in the strangest of
weird picture-writing
Of love and the chase.

This story I read there. Dim on the rock,
I found the strange writing,
Translated and wove
The pictures I saw into lines of the language
I know best, inditing
This legend of love.

The Fold of the Waters

The waters reach, in the white north land,
Stream arms to a thousand plains;
The sheer banks stand
With stern command
To keep a course to the lonely strand
Where beauty in silence reigns.

Athabasca gleams like a thread of light
Dropt lazily 'twixt her walls.
The moon by night
Builds a bridge of white
Where elfins dance on the ripples bright
And the lure of the northland calls.

The river blends, in a movement vast,
Great floods from the hills afar;
The plains all past,
The waves at last
Are shepherded in their fold so fast
Where the emerald waters are.

Maniboza bright bids his north winds hew
Through the churning seas a way,
That the Manitou,
In ice canoe
With icicle oar, to the sun's igloo,
May go to awaken the day.

The northern sea all flame-lit lies
When the long, long night is done;
The darkness dies
From the midnight skies
When Mana, the light-god, open pries
The gates of the truant sun.

Wenonah of the Wild

In the northern skies clear-shining,
Once, a star with emerald-gleam
Loved a chieftain's peerless daughter
By the great north-flowing stream.

Hair of ruby dipt in darkness
Blent with sunrise as with fire;
Eyes elate with love's young glory,
Deep with light of love's desire.

Cheek of nut-brown shadow glinted
With a blush of crimson glow;
Form elusive, spirit daring
As an arrow from the bow.

And the north land loved this daughter
Of the fragrant forest-wild,
Loved the dark entrancing beauty
Of the chieftain's peerless child.

The Star's Love

Eve's purple dust sinks to its golden urn
Where in the west, the sun's red banners burn.

The wigwam's smoke that warms the pillared air
Mounts in a shaft to greet the sunset glare.

Soon, on the night is lifted high, afar,
Serene, intense, one iridescent star;

And in the dark is heard a maiden's prayer;—
The heart of Love is listening everywhere.

Wenonah's Prayer

Star of my love, beneath thine emerald light,
With steadfast hope and trust, I kneel to-night.

Before thy heavens, Light of my life, I bow;
For I am lone and vigilant as thou.

The fairest day is drear and dark to me,
A constant moan, uncomforted by thee;

But when I find thy deep-rayed tent of light
So pure, so far, more lonely is the night.

No dusky brave's most eloquent desire
Could move my will or set my soul afire;

I turn me home to where my heavens are,
And find thee there, my radiant hero star.

The Star's Wooing

Not in yon heavens I stand, but at thy side
Wenonah mine, my beautiful, my bride!

Long moons ago I loved thee in the west
And hovered near thee in thy woodland rest;

Then long I lost the joy-gleam of that face
Which makes thee far the loveliest of thy race.

In wild despair of reaching thee, I ran
To earth and took the godlike form of man.

Behold I speak to thee and, trembling much,
That gentle hand of thine, I softly touch;

Then slowly turn and lo! those glorious eyes
More beautiful than the deep star-sown skies.

Alone no more a pilgrim of the night,
But by thy side to thrill thy soul with light,

I come to thee; Oh, tell me now thou art
My bride, my own, Wenonah of my heart.

Then, through the world of love shall travel far
In living dream, Wenonah and her star.

The Bride of the Star

O Love, more deep and vast than the wide sky,
Here in thine arms close held, I trembling lie,

And drink the dews of Paradise again
When Love no more is loneliness and pain,

But all the bliss of vision touched with flame
Speaks in my soul thine everlasting name!

Blue Athabasca

Blue Athabasca,
Splendours of evening
Lie on thy waters.

There is my dream-ship
Crowned by the sunlight
Flung o'er the mountains.

There my dream-laughter
Stands in the sunset
Breathing her gladness.

Hair glory-flowing,
Eyes of deep joyance,
Smile like the sunrise

Queen of my dream-ship
Trimmed for the northlands,
Prow to the Arctic.

Blue Athabasca,
Clearest of waters,
Woo the aurora.

On to the Arctic,
On to the ramparts
Of the Mackenzie.

Bear my dream-laughter
On thy blue billow
Clear as her eyes are,

Lifeward and joyward,
Ripple each wave to her,
Make thy soul slave to her,

Till in the far off
Ocean of Thule,
Challenging iceberg,

Daring the breakers
Out on the eerie
Waves of the Arctic,

We, the immortals,—
Thou, the joy-hearted,
I, the star-pilgrim,—

Plunging and floating,
Heaved on the billows
Of the vast ocean,

Rest in the cradle
Of the great waters,
Loving and dreaming.

. . . . .

Blue Athabasca,
Splendours of evening
Lie on thy waters.

Come, O Dream-Laughter,
Fountain of joyance,
Faerie of Thule,

Come to my dream-ship
Trimmed for the north-land,
Prow to the Arctic.

1918

WOMAN

WOMAN

Unlock the gates. The ancient paths are ended;
  On, to the high roads of a larger dream!
Hurl the grim past, unpraised and undefended,
  Upon the mercy of that silent stream
That bears our yesterdays to lethean shores
While life, with new expansion, sunward soars.

Our God has dreamed a wondrous consummation—
  A brighter world, of wisdom, truth and power;
Of art and beauty, joy and inspiration,
  And we are living in that fateful hour
When from the East He flames His central beam—
Himself the sun—from the Mirror of His dream.

O radiant Woman, from your first dominion
  Where Sappho sang to each harmonious star,
Mortals have heard the drum-beat of your pinion
  Along those skies where all your treasures are:
Ithuriel's spear shall touch once more your lids
And make you wiser than the pyramids.

But ink would clot, the golden pen corroding,
  Should it depict the brute tyrannic flame
That crushed your soul in cruel thraldom, boding
  Its curse of insincerity and shame;
Degraded you with subtlety and lust,
And blurred your image in the loathsome dust.

Your love, the clinging ivy, pride you flattered,
  Insidious as the snake's elusive track;
You conquered mighty strongholds, empires shattered,
  Led man, half blind and captive, forth and back;
You fed his vanity, each lightest whim:
A selfish hypocrite, you humoured him.

You sold yourself for maintenance and pleasure
  To be his mistress with the right to roam
Under convention's eye—that was your measure—
  Within four walls unblushingly called 'home.'
You deemed your bruisèd sister base and vile,
But gave her tempter your most winsome smile.

So came your progeny unsought to being,
  An earth-born, sensual, unwelcome brood,
Low-browed, false-hearted, boastful, but unseeing,
  By base desires and evil thoughts pursued;
They saw no more God's lily in the vale,
Nor heard His music in the roaring gale.

In all the murk of veiling sense and blindness
  That hid the beauty of the inner light;
What wonder if they missed the roads of kindness
  And stumbled often when they most were right?
Then fell the horror of a baleful star,
The blood-red beak of that mad demon, War.

Man's rule had made the earth a reeking shamble,
  The church, too oft, a grafter's paradise,
Commerce a random plunge, a selfish gamble,
  And education—his who had the price;
Manhood was cheap; wealth was the highest trust,
And Womanhood was trampled in the dust.

In those dark days I heard a woman praying,
  Fearful for self, more for her unborn child;
These were the broken words I heard her saying:
  (How great her terror, breathing words so wild!)

O God! to-morrow—
  Surely You know—
  I am to go
Through the great sorrow.

I, a weak woman,—
  Soon to give birth
  To a child of earth,—
Humble, yet human.

Christ of the ages
  By no sin defiled,
  Pity my child.
Is he sin's wages?

What are his chances
  In a world like this?
  Answer—a hiss!
A forked tongue glances!

Out of love fashioned,
  Flung like a churl
  Into the swirl
Of life impassioned;

It may be—yes, maybe
  You have forgot.
I will not complain;
I'll suffer the pain.
  But God! will you not
Pity my baby?

Such was the woman's prayer—God's mighty daughter
Who giveth every man his birth to time;
Will she, then, longer give her sons for slaughter
When she has power of law to bar the crime
That blasts the very image of God's face
In her dear child—the child of all the race?

Through smoke of battle, all the deadly stifle
Of poisoned air, the rumbling cannonade,
The ceaseless, quick staccato of the rifle,
The pallid harvest in the trenches laid;
The hail of death that scatters from the skies,
And all the horror vain ambition buys;

Through frivolries of vogue and freaks of fashion,
The greed of trade, the scheme of jealousy,
The base design, the worse than brutal passion,
There comes the dawning of reality;
And bells shall ring in all the towers of strife
Proclaiming Love the conqueror of life.

I see the promise of a juster order
Where righteousness is honoured and shall win;
Where worth, not wealth, is made a self-rewarder
By taking all the profit out of sin.
Earth is at springtide; every heart is young,
And hope is rife on every human tongue.

Man's faith shall find a surer lamp to guide him
To bolder courage in the ways of peace,
For woman's lofty wing shall soar beside him
And stir his best endeavour to release;
Shall lead him greatly to his highest goal
And love him to the summits of his soul.

She searches all the hidden depths within him
And finds him far more noble than he knew;
'Tis love's last, best expedient to win him
And make him great and godlike through and through.
He rises to the promise of that gleam,
Resolved to realize her golden dream.

But in the finding of that lode of treasure,—
Those powers divine that in his spirit hide—
She too has climbed, in fuller, loftier measure,
To be the splendour she has glorified.
Now, where man's broken strongholds lately stood,
Rise to the blue, the towers of womanhood.

Where Sargon, Genghis and Kaiser have broken the nations
With war's cruel thrust,
Behold even yet the blight of their wild devastations,
Their chariot dust.
Our God is patient forever. The sword on man's car gleams;
His war-chargers fret,
And we see in the glittering dew reflecting His star-beams,
God's eyes with grief wet.

Behold now His hand! The earth in its terror doth tremble
In dread of His wrath;
But strength shall no longer alone in council assemble
As hereto it hath;

"For I will descend from the hills in joy
of My splendour,"
Saith God, the All-kind,
"And give man a comrade wiser of heart
and more tender,
Nor shall they be blind;

For both shall drink deep of the far mys-
terious fountain
Of wisdom and ruth;
Their ships shall soar from mountain to
answering mountain
And life shall be truth."
Arise from thy dreams, thou heart of the
fragrant healing;
The light breaks at last,
And peace falls now like a strain of
melody stealing
From the vault of the vast.

Arise to thy dawning, breather of
brighter ages,
Deep vortex of light,
Till, hearing thy song of new life, the
earth's crimson pages
Turn purity-white;
And that pool of blood that we name our
civilization
'Neath the azure shall lie
Like a silvery sea that mirrors its joy-
creation
Of crystalline sky.

Arise! Be no longer slave to a slave
that is human
To do his behest;
Companion be thou; not greater nor less
is woman
Than man at his best.
The sun, even now, is kindling his fires
of the morning
With flame of his beams;
Arise to the call of his trumpets, his
clarion warning;
Arise from thy dreams!

She wakes! She comes! The earth is flower-fragrant
With fresh aroma of her dewy breath;
Her woman-wisdom, now so long a vagrant,
Shall dig away the upas roots of death;
She shall not cry aloud where truth is heard,
But life shall thunder in her gentlest word.

Then toss your heads, ye trees, in sacred laughter,
And kiss their leaves, ye breezes of the west;
Let all the four winds, bearing incense, waft her
The urge of energy, the joy of rest,
Until the soul, from life's late-opened pages,
Shall sing for earth God's anthem of the ages.

The challenge from her peaceful trumpets shrilling
Blares nevermore the bugle's battle word;
Her gentle spirit all the world is thrilling,
And all shall yield them to the silent sword
That kills all hate and greed, their hosts defying,
Swift as the light across the ether flying.

"Honour and arms" no more the future's warder,
The law of love shall be our constant light
Till Justice fill the world with truth and order
And beat to dust the ramparts of the night.
Temples shall rise in silence everywhere
Whose walls are reverence, whose altars, prayer.

Far o'er the hills I hear a song of gladness:
Behold they come; a brave and humble few,
Facing the storm of selfishness and madness,
Shall prove 'tis wisdom to be kind and true;
Their task to make our human laws divine,
And every home a consecrated shrine.

In that high task, the wonder touch of woman
Shall add to strength such grace and symmetry,
The towers of life shall then be wholly human
With corner-stones of law and liberty.
So righteousness shall find its full release
In lives of perfect beauty, power and peace.

For woman's soul is a mysterious ocean,
A spring, a revolutionary sun,
A thunder-flame of rare, intense emotion
When full-controlled her noble senses run;
A watcher on the walls of life is she
To warn and guide in roads of destiny.

Our condemnation is her tragic lateness;
How long her mission was not understood!
How could she love a man devoid of greatness
Unless in pity or in saviourhood?
Her powers were latent till the night was gone;
Her rising is the glory of the dawn.

No more for her a dreary, dull stagnation,
The constant boredom of a minor part;
Stern purpose hers, the passion of creation,
Not through a marriage that betrays the heart
With luxury by affluence supplied,
Or economic ease to toil denied.

Hers is a lion love sincere and regal,
Not meek submission of a bruisèd flower,
Nor perfumed wantonness, though wholly legal,
Void of reality or faith or power.
Her forces all from God derivèd are,
Deep-rooted in the ancient years afar.

Woman shall be in the new era dawning,
Not in the gardens of Hesperides
With lovers who upon her beauty fawning,
Connive the forfeit of her liberties;
But she shall love and work and greatly live,
Adding to life what man could never give:

A kindlier spirit and a clearer vision
Tuned to the music of a gentler heart;
A keener judgment, a more just decision,
A finer and more comprehensive art
That all the while in bell-toned chords are pealing
Around the world the comfort of God's healing.

Strike the white iron ere it dim to redness,
Ere sunset shadows mourn for ancient noon;
Before the fires of life are dulled to deadness,
As when earth's image hides the eclipsèd moon.
The flame creative bans the base alloy,
And courage is the only road to joy.

Manhood shall feel the tingling touch magnetic
  Of hope that holds him firm in mighty tasks;
Woman, alert with life and energetic,
  Shall cease from posing 'neath her subtle masks,
And be the splendid soul none can but love,
True as the suns in the pure night above.

I heard a radiant being in her praise
Break forth in song, while his enraptured gaze
  Seemed fixed on some dear face—his own dream-
      haunted—
    That love had framed in memory's mystic sight,
  And hung against the sunset skies undaunted,
    Knowing her beauty must outflame the light.

"I heard a calling in the stilly watches—
A voice that pealed like soft-toned bells afar:
The solemn pendulum ticked in its notches,
  But in my soul was joy's intensive star;
    I knew the call, and yet, this I aver,
    I more than half believe 'twas I called her.

      Come, my loved one, to the feast
        Ere the rosy fringe of dawn
      Steal into the slumbering east
          And the last faint stars are gone.
            Holy, holy is the night,
            Blazing with its jewels bright.

      Elfin lanterns gem the sea;
        Thou than heaven more beauteous art;
      Lo, I bring the gift to thee
        Wonder-flaming in my heart.
          Come, my loved one, ere the light
          Banishes the lingering night.

Not where sultry southern skies
  Languish over lilied bowers;
Where the artist Nature dyes
  Scarlet the pomegranate flowers,
    Nor where tangled vines are drest
    In the valleys of the West.

Far into the wilds we'll go
  In a faith forever true;
There a sturdier life shall glow,
  Fresh and clear as silver dew.
    Joy doth quiver, being caught
    In the arms of such a thought.

There to beauty, light and love,
  All the patient centuries bow;
Never did the stars above
  Glisten more serene than now.
    Come and let us drink delight
    From the goblet of the night.

Where the tiny bluebells are
  Only faeries hear the chime;
Breezes bend the daisy's star
  And the bracken beats the time;
    Come, my loved one, fare we forth,
    To the far and fragrant North.

Soothing fingers of the breeze
  Stir the fronds upon the wall;
Sweet aromas from the trees
  O'er our subtle senses fall,
    And the faintest music stirs
    In the softly breathing firs.

Never tuneful thrush at even
In his lonely forest fane,
Nor the seraph in his heaven
Thrilled to such enchanting strain;
Love is godlike when it sips
Wine of rapture from thy lips.

Till our souls dissolved in one,
Pure and purposeful and free
As the goings of the sun
O'er his empire of the sea,
Consecrate their visioned power
To that love-creative hour.

Oh for life, ye thrones above,
Potent as the central fires!
Would that I might speak my love
Strongly as my soul desires
Till the night shall swoon away
Into palpitating day.

Her blue eyes deepened into sapphire tender,
And sought my own, all flaming with desire;
The full expression of their radiant splendour,
Than sunrise lovelier, purer than a fire,
Surpassed the glories of a thousand skies
With all their wild sweet wonder of surmise.

There in the spreading of the crescent morning,
Transported by the elemental power
And passion of the world, but wholly scorning
The baser opulence of earth's brief hour,
They folded heaven about their earthly forms
And were as one with universal storms,

In one great flood of mighty concourse meeting,
  One rhythmic heaving of a tideless sea,
Like choric waves, their buoyant hearts were beating
  On the far shores of immortality.
The larger meaning of their part sublime
Was art,—a mystery that baffles time.

The stars looked down, their benediction smiling,
  The atmosphere was hushed to storm eclipse;
Earth felt, where granite cliffs were upward piling,
  The kiss of heaven upon her mountain lips,
And all the vocal silences were teeming
With bell-toned chords of Love's eternal dreaming.

Their steadfast purpose holding, not to falter,
  They gave eternal form to their desire,
For in their souls, they raised to God an altar
  And fused their being in its sacred fire.
So love became for them an open gate
And every power to life was consecrate.

Then was the soul of woman girt with gladness
  More vibrant than the hermit bird's wild tune
When o'er the forest fringe, almost to madness
  He thrills with joy the fragrant air of June,
More restful than when summer breezes fleet
Elusive o'er the undulating wheat.

She felt God's presence in the common places;
  The little things that dull eyes never see
Put glory on, and all the upturned faces
  Of flowers and ferns were wreathed in mystery.
The kindly earth smiled like a vale in Arden
Where God at eve was walking in His garden.

When on the woods and waters night was falling,
  And vesper bells across the gloaming pealed,
Ere whippoorwill's insistent note was calling
  Or earth was yet in folds of darkness sealed;
Beneath her woman's heart she felt a thrill,
A token of new life, then all was still.

So woman in her raiment of the sun
  Received Love's coronet of sceptred power
Which deathless faith from deeps of life had won
  In this, another great life-crowning hour.
Ere on the throne of motherhood she sat,
She sang this sacred joy-magnificat:—

Heart of all holiness,
  Gladness and glory,
God of all wisdom,
  Wondrous the story:
Thou hast ordained me
  Mother to be
Of a child of the ages
  Born unto Thee.

Now is my spirit
  Strong and uplifted,
To Thy great goodness
  Holily gifted;
Be Thy bright splendour
  Rayed on my child,
Kindness incarnate,
  Lowliness mild.

Perfect, ennoble,
  Sanctify woman;
Crown her with beauty,
  Strengthen, illumine,
Till each love-offering
  Humble as mine
Be joy-sacrificial,
  Human-divine.

Now shall my body,
  Sacrament-broken,
Give to the future
  A final token;
In Love's pavilion
  Tented secure,
Bear a true saviour
  Gentle and pure.

Loud let the starry
  Heavens, blue-vaulted,
Chorus Love's praises
  With voice exalted.
Sing, happy people;
  Glory be Thine,
God our Salvation,
  Father divine!

When sunset brought the hour of contemplation,
  Held in her mother's arms and lifted high,
Their babe was given to God in consecration
  Before the splendour of the western sky.
The mother's heart, heroic, strong and glad,
With all the earth and heaven, communion had.

The matchless music of those tendernesses
That earth's afflictions to oblivion roll
Soon hushed the little heart with dream-caresses
And filled with wonder its immortal soul.
The child was sweet as all such flowers are,
But being his babe too, 'twas dearer far.

The mother's voice was to her child revealing
A store of memories for the coming years;
She sang of life and loveliness with feeling
Of joy so great it sometimes spoke through tears.

Lovely is the night.
The silver moon
Sprinkles dewy light
O'er breathless June.
In her pretty cradle boat
Our lily on the stream
Is drifting to the strand
Where water-lilies float
Near the Isles of Dream
In the Somewhere Land.
Our baby flower is drifting,
Drifting, drifting
To the Isles of Dream
In the Somewhere Land.

In her beauty robes
Of rest and sleep,
Angels keep our babe
In slumber deep.
In her lily-petaled gown,
Our flower on the stream
Is closing like a hand
And drifting, drifting down
To the Isles of Dream
In the Somewhere Land.

Our lily-bud is drifting,
Drifting, drifting
To the Isles of Dream
In the Somewhere Land.

Love-born,* the child in grace and strength immortal
Increased with years for service of her time;
She came each day to some new wonder-portal,
Thresholds of life and thoughts of things sublime.
Through all the silence of her soul was ringing
The song of life the heart of God was singing.

The stream into the ocean flows unceasing;
All things are greater for renewing strife;
True wealth is spending, using is increasing,
And love is loveliest when it most is life.
Make love the purpose in the life of men
And earth shall be a Paradise again.

No more was motherhood, with justice girded,
Submissive while the nation bruised its heart;
Children no more in dens of filth were herded,
But lived the fuller life of truth and art.
Theirs was the earth and all that is therein
Of loveliness that man for them could win.

Yet from the hideous past with slavery reeking,
Came hissing down the eloquent, stern years
Nightmares of old oppressions, phantoms speaking
Of shame and lust, of tyranny and tears.
What wonder if a woman missed the goal
Sometimes, and stooped to juggle with her soul?

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*This noble word should be rescued from all sinister meanings.

A fadeless glory in her shield is shining,
  Despite all dints of war, all stains of blood;
Its deepest scars are proof of her refining,
  The hall-mark on the gold of womanhood.
A thousand years of affluence are less
Than one great hour of triumph o'er distress.

No more dependent, woman now was braver
  Than he who would have bartered for her life;
Who, for a price, would pledge himself to save her
  From honest weariness, from toil and strife.
'Twas here the tempter tried, in honour's chain,
The subtlest, weakest link, but tried in vain.

Emerging from an age-long false condition,
  From weakness born of bondage and despair,
From cunning grown to wondrous intuition —
  A weapon for defence men seldom wear,
She struggled up life's road and stood at last
A queen—the conqueror of her baser past.

She trimmed her lamp in ancient halls of pleading
  Where empty precedents are held in awe,
And soon the light of equity was leading
  To fairer judgments and to saner law.
Oppression from the courts of earth had fled
And hidden darkly with the cryptic dead.

The walls of home were now no more regarded
  As utmost limits of a woman's life;
No more her tender love was fiercely warded
  With hateful jealousy and wounding strife.
The gates of life flew open at her nod,
And flowers blushed to beauty where she trod.

Great-hearted woman! Through the wistful ages
  Made sacred by the pathos of your tears,
Calm in your soul amid the storm that rages
  Along the foaming coast-line of the years,
Guard, as the gentle mother of our race,
In every child, the image of God's face.

The living world is bathed in softer beauty
  Since you have found your final full release;
So all shall reach, through sacrifice and duty,
  The portals of unfathomable peace.
Life is not life wherein is no emprise;
The heart is dead when aspiration dies.

Loud trumpets blare along the purple ranges;
  Life! is the call that leaps from peak to peak
Till every heart its central purpose changes,
  For in that word, each hears the Lord Christ
    speak.
His voice eternal flames through every soul
And pushes service to Love's highest goal.

The doll in her house of wealth,
  The wanton in langour and lust,
That shadowy form of stealth
  In the street, with her soul in the dust;

Ah yes, and that soulless propriety
  Who sold herself for a home,
Put chains on her life, called it piety,
  A slave beneath heaven's blue dome,

Shall look up and see Christ some day,
  From the ashes of self shall arise
And follow, not far away
  The beckoning hand of the skies.

God will not forget in the morn
To freshen His flowers with dew;
Already the new age is born—
When His beautiful dream shall come true,

When His garden completing,
He hears in the towers of time
His great bell-tones beating
The joy of His perfected chime.

How long, O God, shall the great life stand waiting
While greedy wolves devour the tender child?
Shall lust consume till every heart is hating
Its own enchainment to a corse defiled?
Must youth forever glut a minotaur
Of greed more tyrannous than war?

Our spirit armour dimmed, our aims defeated,
Shall we like poltroons pander to the foe?
The cause shall prosper when, our ranks completed,
We rise as one and to the battle go,
Nor cease till every human life respond
With wholesome vision of the bright beyond.

Reject her—woman of eternal sorrows—
And our humanity shall stagger on
Down darkling roads of turbulent to-morrows
To fail at last when every hope is gone;
But would our souls be worthy to be free
And reach their portals of high destiny,

Make marriage just to woman; then far higher,
As queen of life, its source, its wing, its soul;
Set her on peaks of life and glorify her;
Make her with man its purpose and its goal,
The harp on which the ear of Heaven lingers
When touched to song by Love's harmonious fingers.

Then all the chivalry that lights the story
  Of valour and romance in ages past,
The sacrifice that crowns our race with glory,
  The spell that legend over life has cast,
Shall strive with reason and the word of Him
Whose eyes are as the flaming seraphim,

To give us vision of the perfect beauty
  That glows within the common things we see;
To celebrate the dignity of duty,
  The joy and wonder of reality,
Till even the dust on which our feet have trod
Shall gleam with the magnificence of God.

The pencils of the dawn are slowly writing,
  In characters of flame across the lands,
The doom of hate, courageous souls inciting
  To fuller life as faith in life expands.
Love rends the veil; conflicts forever cease,
And life is filled with ministries of peace.

God's dream comes true; a richer life emerges;
  Hope's deeper strains from olden chantries chime;
Unlock the gates. Behold the shining verges
  Of one full-orbed humanity sublime.

I give thee my hand, rare spirit of beauty and
      splendour;
    My soul would impart
New courage and gladness. Brave be thou and
      yet tender
    As the love in thy heart.

With thee, sore oppressed by thy burden of faintness and sorrow,
Thy brother, I stand,
Till we rise step by step to the noon of a greater to-morrow
In hope's pleasant land.

We two shall walk in paths of achievement together
Till the purple light breaks
O'er fields of a dawn that gleams like a fluttering feather
Along the grey peaks.

Oh! boundless the life in that day of our utmost decision,
When body and soul
And being athrill, we climb to the summits of vision,
The gates of the goal.

We two, hand in hand, to hilltops of triumph ascending
Where mountain paths meet,
Shall find amid glooms and glories windswept and unending,
Life rich and complete.

What landscapes of joy! What wings of the sunrise for power!
What seraphim burning!
I find in thee all for which spirit and sense till this hour
Were hungrily yearning.

Thus on, till the light of all being is rippling
around us
On paths we have trod;
Till the sun bursts aloft o'er the hills where the
morning hath found us
Entempled with God.

1920

VIGNETTES

VIGNETTES

THE LIGHTHOUSE

(Woodrow Wilson)

Aloft upon the frontier of the sky,
A beacon blazes o'er the fretful sea;
Ghost-like it flames as if Eternity
Had set the lighthouse of the world on high
To warn the life-ships sailing silent by.
The surge beneath, on crags of cruelty,
Its dead-march beats, and hell disports with glee,
While careless keepers let the great light die.

Earth-tabernacles crumble and decay,
But winds of God shall fan the flickering spark;
The torch shall gleam across the foam alway,
For truth, once seen, can never more be dark.
The morning star that dims when night is gone
Has told the day the meaning of the dawn.

1920

SHOGHI EFFENDI

We build our love around you like a wall
Transparent as the beauty of the skies;
We know your heart has heard the eternal call;
God keep you always loving, strong and wise.

Inspired and luminous, your life a tower
To guard and keep the roads of joy-release;
Your voice of music and your words of power
Shall lead to doors of all enfolding peace.

1922

WALT WHITMAN

A new authentic voice declared the meaning of the
century.
The sun that long had warmed the peaks bent to
the valleys,
And all the earth was thrilled with wonder of the
morning.

He stood with eyes dilate and parted lips, by hope
transfigured,
Knowing humanity itself raised to its highest power
Is God's supremest revelation.

He fared with love and freedom to goals of utmost
joy,
Swaddled no young evangel in the bonds of creed,
Nor wrapped the soul in limitations narrower than
life.

The promise of his faith found home of spacious-
ness
Within the vaster pledges of his being;
No pious words, for him, fenced off a little saintli-
ness
Of holy book or day, of church or prophet, time or
land,
From others named profane to justify a large in-
difference to Love.

He never snarled at brotherhood with sect or race
or cult.
He saw humanity, an ingle-circle in the house of
life
Where no doors closed to bar one child from wealth
of love or art.

Save where it fails of Love, life never fails,
And death is life beyond the sunset hills
With no insuperable wall.

So lived he, like the lilac or the pine, true to himself;
Saw in the patience of the outer dark, the inner light,
Soared through the deep blue eagle spaces of the sky,
Pilgrimed the open road and served his fellow man.

Such was Walt Whitman, breaker of the icons of all slaveries,
And friend of the sincere.

1920

MARJORIE PICKTHALL

Her life was beauty
Chiselled in sun-gleams of soft gold
To lines of sculptured loveliness.

For one sweet moment on the earth
The clouds were broken, and this star
Spilled opulent glory on us here,
Ah, such a little while!
Then suddenly the rift was night;
For Love stooped down and lifted her
To bright alcoves of rest.

Now, let us gather up the jewels from her hand
And set them in a crown of golden stars
That o'er her name shall shine,
While she, at home beyond the dark,
Beholds reality.

1922

BLISS CARMAN

Clear-singing trumpet to the listening soul
  That hears unseen the truth-releasing word;
  How many heroes by your numbers stirred
Are marching to a far sublimer goal
Than wealth and ease that take unearnèd toll
  Of unrequited toil! Your call they heard
  And hasted sternly their young lives to gird,
The half good spurning to obtain the whole.

Comrade of Nature, how each rill and stream
  Runs in your lines to new exploits of art!
The myriad music of your lyric dream
  On wing of gladness lifts the haunted heart;
    The flowers escape their bonds of earth and sod
    To keep their poet's holiday with God.

1921

ROBERT NORWOOD

From this rare instrument of finest tone
  Keyed by the Harper into perfect tune,
  With every note that thrills the throat of June,
With every voice that sings around the throne;
Pours music of a hope that fans to fire
  The misty twilights of the glooming days,
  Flames faith to courage for the tiring ways,
And stirs the soul to larger life-desire.

Here is a window whence the outrushing light
  Bursts full upon a world entombed in sense,
  As from a mirror in whose deeps intense
The skies reflect their sunglow on our sight,
    A herald of that dawn we soon shall see
    The age of light beginning now to be.

1923

KEPLER

O Thou whose ancient, all-disclosing light
  Brooded above the dark, primeval deep
  When first the firmament was fixed to keep
The waters from the waters; with new sight,
I trace the ample courses of Thy might
  Along its sunlit pathways through the steep
  Abyss of heaven where distant planets sweep,
And hear the music of the spherèd night.

Lo, I have found the wondrous three-fold law
  That swings the balanced worlds. I stand in awe
  Of mine own vision, conscious of its worth,
While motion gives emotion larger birth,
    Nor fret for recognition; I can wait
    As patient as the ages, calm as fate.

1912

HARRY RANDALL

The magic gates of memory open wide,
  And your free spirit mixes with my own;
The rhythm of truth lifts with the lifting tide
  And sets the lords of being on their throne.

We range all life; the light emerges clear
  Of new dominions—even now they rise;
We know the morn of life is verging near,
  New dynasties, new empires of the wise.

Day breaks to dawn; the triumph nears apace,
  Till Justice with irrevocable rod
Restore the world, and our self-blighted race
  Arise and look into the face of God.

1923

EDWIN MARKHAM

The toiler bore too long in mute despair—
  Too patiently the whips of callous greed.
  By crushing burdens numbed, by cruel need.
His heart long dead to hope, would no more dare
Adventure's aid—for help look anywhere;
  While those his toil enriched left him to bleed
  Where they had crucified him—took no heed,
But nailed him to the rood, and left him there.

Then down the roads of agony that gird
  With tragic lines the goings of our life;
  Stronger than wail of pain or noise of strife,
An echo of Golgotha's cry was heard—
Your moan of deathless song. Then was unfurled
The flag whose folds of Love shall heal the world.
1923

FRANCIS GRIERSON

(On hearing him play)

The web of day was woven. Lang'rous Nature
  Leaned on the breast of Night;
The moon was mounting to meridian splendour—
  A shield of silver bright.
Before the dimly-lighted clavier, dreaming,
  Thrilled with eternal peace,
The master bowed his head one voiceless moment
  Awaiting full release.
Then suddenly swept down the great-winged silence
  One massive chord sublime
That shook the night with solemn diapason
  And strange concordant chime.
The triton-blast was heard across the billows;
  The norns on tiptoe ran;
Along the rippling silver-crested moonbeams,
  I heard the pipes of Pan.

In accents of the whispering forests breathing,
In thunders of the sea,
Its cadence told of unimagined eras
And nations yet to be.
It brought new springtime to the earth, concealing
With flowers the winter's scars;
It piped in bird-lilts to the heavens, distilling
The healing of the stars.
The choral voices met, embraced and blended
In one stupendous whole,
Revealing in their mystic power and beauty,
The legend of the soul.

Too soon it ceased. The race of matchless music
And mighty chords was run;
The stars of God had meanwhile slowly mounted
To highways of the sun.
Along the south, red Cyclops, blazing yonder,
Glared with his scorpion eye,
The only sound, a lonely night-bird calling
Across great gulfs of sky.

1919

THE CRUSADER

(Wm. Restelle Shier)

His calmness was self-mastery;
His soul was like the blue expanse;
His word was a white light,
The strength of fourscore years
Compressed into this youth
Surged, not torrential,
But intense, serene and joyous,
Clear as the day and quiet as the stars.

His pen turned sable ink to sunshine
Focussed in beacon rays—
The light of comradeship.
His justice-loving soul
In great life-tides pressed joywards,
Holding the weakest child at the race-front
That princes, purple-robed, proud-born,
Should not come earlier to the goal.
He showed each comrade how to meet the foe
And make defeat impossible
Though fighting he should fall.

Some saviours bear perpetual martyrdom;
Some by their enemies are lifted up
To immortality. He, with too fragile frame,
Bore freedom's standard down the continent,
And fell unbowed amid the fight
To rest, high-throned in many hearts,
Wholesome of memory.

1911

MOUNTAINS OF THE DAWN

MOUNTAINS OF THE DAWN

GOD AND MAN

God is eternity, the sky, the sea,
  The consciousness of universal space,
  The source of energy and living grace,
Of life and light, of love and destiny.
God is that deep, ethereal ocean, free,
  Whose billows keep their wide unbarriered place
  Amid the stars that move before His face
In robes of hurricane and harmony.

A light that twinkles in a distant star,
  A wave of ocean surging on the shore,
  One substance with the sea; a wing to soar
Forever onward to the peaks afar;
  A soul to love, a mind to learn God's plan,
  A child of the eternal—such is man.

1910

THE HARP

Harper divine! with Love's elusive fingers
Touch the strings of this soft-breathing lyre
Till, vocal as the forest, choral as the sea,
They voice the everlasting song,
Fill all the air with ecstasy of wings,
And turn the harp to music.

1916

THE GREAT DIVIDE

I.

Each day is like a continent. We ride
  From purple dawn to eve's declining shore,
  Climbing expectant where white eagles soar
Across the central blue. The great divide
Is set between two peaks that gaping wide
  Stand mute apart and keep a bastioned door
  Of vision open to the ample floor
Of vast arenas sloping to the tide.

Ye gates of God that span the pillared light,
  How oft, dull-eyed, your sculptured walls I pass,
  To all their towering beauty blind, alas!
And dead to all their harmony and might.
  Henceforth, each morn, with mounting steps I plod
  Until I reach the spreading gates of God.

II.

Here where my feet attain the central height,
  My soul goes forth to vaster fields of power.
  Each day some titan toil, each glorious hour
Some clearer purpose bursts upon the sight.
On wings of dream, on billows of the light,
  I turn each moment to some lofty tower
  Among the sun-drenched hills, or fragrant bower
Where joy is free from menacing and blight.

I halt my goings in the heights of day
To glimpse my dream of happiness; in awe
  My soul leans back upon the changeless law
And lo! the thing is mine I prized alway.
  By faith transformed, the hope of my ideal
  Has now become the actual, the real.

1921

RIZWAN

Give me a voice of mystic flame,
O God, I pray;
I would not speak unless the urge
Come from the skies;
I would be dumb as solemn death
And nothing say
Until my voice from the world's soul
As music rise.
When Thou would'st speak, let me proclaim
The vast emotion,
My notes all blending with the song
Of woods and ocean;
As Thou dost will, let utterance
Be my desire;
Lo, I would be for Thee alway
A tongue of fire.

1920

THE TEMPLE

O Love immortal, beautiful and olden,
Our eyes thy walls of splendour soon shall see;
We'll build for thee a temple grand and golden
With silent hammers of eternity.

Come, let us build a city, O my brothers,
The loveliest and holiest dream of time;
The joy and inspiration of all others,
Unique for beauty in an age sublime.

Come, let us help with deeds of love and pity
The toilworn children in a world forlorn;
O brothers, let us build the golden city;
Come, let us rear the temple of the morn.

1922

USURY

Heir to the wealth of all the storied past,
A thousand generations pour their life
Into this heart of mine;
'Twere base indeed if these should be the last.
Life's standard bearing in some noble strife,
To advance the battle line.

Let life grow richer by its cost to me,
Till hope, too strong for dream of weak despair,
Seize each momentous goal;
No monster of chimeric mystery,
Or fabled horror with its deathful stare,
Palsy my dauntless soul.

Lord of this heritage of life and hope,
Dowered with what gifts the ages could achieve
By dint of toil and tears,
I, in my turn, with some new problem cope,
And gratefully the sure solution leave
For all the coming years.

1910

THE SCULPTOR'S HAND

Ere He stooped from the fields of His passionless might
With the music of worlds in His heart,
Love dwelt in a splendour of dazzling light—
In the blaze of His suns apart.

Though He bent to the lull of a garden grot
From the fires of His glowing noon,
To a singing thrush, and a star-gleam caught
In the mesh of a misty moon,

The throbbing chord of His deep desire
Was tuned to a higher theme,
And the joy of His thought leapt up like fire
To mould the face of His dream.

He breathed His love into forms of earth
And called His creation "Man";
With burdens of toil, with tears and mirth,
He fashioned him true to His plan.

With the sternest tasks He made him strong;
In storms He taught him duty;
He blended strife with light and song
And trained his soul to beauty.

The viewless wonder of His will
Was breathed in art and story;
On every slope of each purple hill
The flowers were glad of His glory.

An ecstasy throbbed at the heart of things
Like the light of joy when the night is gone—
The song of birds and the lift of wings—
The splendour of enlarging dawn.

He moulded me from the shapeless clod;
He breathed on you and called you His child;
We loved each other and knew our God,
Looked up to His face and smiled.

1922

CHRISTMAS

Give each new day its own good cheer
All other days apart,
And every day throughout the year
Keep Christmas in your heart.

1914

THE VOYAGE

Lift anchor, set sail, and swing out on the deep,
Where waters and winds everlastingly sweep;

Where ripples are smoothed to the heave and the roll,
And ocean and sky are immerged with the soul;

Where thunders boom deeply and cloud-billows form,
And fire blazes out of the heart of the storm;

Where salt vapours fly in the breath of the blast,
And currents and tides bear us on through the vast.

. . . . . .

Ah, life is a ship, and each thought is a sail
Full set to the breezes, emotion the gale,

And God is the blue sky, the thunder, the light,
Revealing His beauty or hiding in night.

Drive on, Breath of God, my own soul is the sea,
And I am a-sailing, a-sailing with Thee.
1912

THE HERO

Large projects are the opportunities of greatness.
When the gossips say the thing's impossible,
The soul with vision brings the cables of the mind,
With pulley-blocks of purpose,
Sets levers firm on fulcrums of design,
And lifts the timbers to their lofty notches;
Then the deed is stenographed upon the sky,
And all the world proclaims a hero!

1923

PRIEST AND PAGAN

He deemed his task a solemn one,
  And kneeled in sombre garb to pray;
Made much of symbols, ancient rites,
  Of holy book and sacred day.

I, on the grass beneath the pine—
  A pagan to my finger tips,
Accounting every flower divine,
  Breathed incense from its petal lips.

And God, in His almighty love,
  Knowing our need, and nothing loath,
Leaned kindly from His heavens above
  And poured His blessing on us both.

1920

THE ETERNAL QUESTION

Monsters beneath the wave,—
Birds that steer to a star;
  The sea below
    And the sea above
  Where the fishes go,
    Or the eagles are.

Billows and sails and storms,
Keels and tides—or the strife
  Of wings that rise
    In a sea of blue
  To the bluer skies
    And a fuller life.

1921

WIND-HORSES

From far-reaching ranges of valley and highland,
The wild west-wind couriers form,
And send out the breezes o'er ocean and island
To herald the on-coming storm.

The wind-horses toss their foam-manes to the thunder
And charge with the lightning and hail;
Their squadrons of tempest are beating things under
The feet of the trampling gale.

Invisible armies course down the free sky-ways,
Cloud-veiling the earth's azure roofs;
They plough the round planet with furrows and highways,
The scars of their hammering hoofs.

They gallop in phalanx, resistless in motion,
A phantom-winged army of ghosts;
They drive their white caravels over the ocean,
And beat them to spray on the coasts.

For stern readjustments the wind-horses battle,
And ever the strongest prevail;
The oaks on the mountains their iron arms rattle,
And laugh as they comb out the gale.

The earth is renewed by the flails of the winter,
Reborn from the womb of the blast;
The hailstones that beat and the lightnings that splinter
Are angels of healing at last.

So all the immortals, the viewless wind-horses,
Face-hidden, feet hidden in flight,
Consuming, enlarging, ennobling the forces
That bend to the infinite light,

Are wings of the silent ones gleaming with glory,
Whose spirits fire-girded and strong,
Dream-souled and cloud-visaged, are sovereigns of story,
The sources of vision and song.

A permanent flame from the Heart of the Ages,
A fire in a vesturing cloud,
Is flung o'er the sensitive souls of the sages
Who cry in the desert aloud.

O weird is their song in its sternness and beauty,
In echoing laughter and tears;
In deeds of heroic adventure and duty,
It rings down the palpitant years.

1917

UNDER THE OPEN SKY

Under the open sky, its myriad star-points gleaming,
The gibbous moon swings up from the eastern hills,
The pine-tree moans as the breeze sweeps through its Æolian heart.
I listen intent to the music and find the music within me;
I gaze on the white, silent moon—its light is within my soul;
The stars, too, shine out of the vast reaches of my own consciousness.
The open heavens are too small to contain me; I contain them.
I crowd them all into the merest corner of my soul
And sometimes forget they are there.

1907

INSPIRATION

I am the fire that glows
  In every kindling dawn,
I am the wind that blows
  The great life-currents on.

I am the river-flood,
  The fountain and the sun,
The streams of red life-blood
  That in your pulses run.

The human heart I urge
  To noon of lustrous day;
To joy's intensest verge,
  I open wide the way.

Whatever wind may blow,
  I set the driven sail;
Through me your soul shall know
  When God rides down the gale.

My pinions soar afar,
  I move the living whole;
I am the beckoning star—
  The wings of your own soul.

1911

THE HOUSE OF DREAM

You may dwell in a mansion towered and tall
  Or camp in a beggar's tents,
  But desert or palace, your sure defence
Is a love that builds no wall.

Oh, a beggar is he, whatever he seem,
  Who lives in a house of things,
  But he is as rich as the Lydian kings
Whose home is a house of dream.

1915

PIONEERING

I ask no sheltered repose;
  I go where struggle is rife,
No grub at the heart of the rose,
  No worm in the apple of life.

This soul shall not stagnate to peace,
  But 'mid the battle debris
Shall find in danger release
  To wind and star-drift and sea;

Shall breathe the ozone of the height,
  Forsake the dark roads it has trod,
Push on to the centre of light
  In joy of adventure with God.

1919

LISTEN

A seat on the Cassiopeian stars,
  A quill from the eagle's wing;
Papyrus gleaned from the fens of Mars
  With ink of darkness and leave to sing:

I would set my song to a larger theme
  Than shepherds blow from the reeds of Pan;
    I would croon to the beat
    Of the Centaur's feet
  In tracks where the hounds of Boötes ran;

For I should listen across the night,
  And hear the tones of that mightier word
That sings in a far intenser light
  The strains of a deep eternal chord.

1922

MYTH

Immortal beauty built her stately home
In laurel grove by leaf-embowered stream,
Cloud-pillared it in Art of Greece and Rome,
And robed in draperies of Olympic dream.

Here is no remnant of a slow decay,
No chronicle degenerate where abide
Dreams insubstantial of a twilight gray,
Or hoary superstition glorified;

Myth is the pulsing of great music, felt
Through the deep thunder of the storm and strife,
In which the jarring notes that will not melt
Are broken in the sacrament of life.

A nobleness the heart can not forget,
Inwoven into deeds and hopes and fears,
And raised aloft in starry silhouette
Along the dim face of forgotten years.

Here youthful eyes have opened drowsy lids
To view the ranks of that immortal throng,
The mighty souls that reared the Pyramids,
And thrilled the marching centuries with song.

Unscathed they stand, immutable, sublime,
Great-souled, beyond the barriers of gloom;
In solemn light above the wrecks of time,
They rise triumphant challenging the tomb.

1915

ONE STEP

Hast thou the wisdom one least step to take?
Take thou that step even though the heavens fall,
Thankful that thou hast faith and power to make
One onward move—to take a step at all.

1914

THE BANYAN

The Banyan builds upon the ground
Its lofty halls, its tents green-gowned;
  Rears shaft and groin of noble plan,
  Great massive architrave and span
With twining branches interwound.

Through all the sultry lands around,
One cool rest-covert is renowned,—
  The joy of every caravan—
    The banyan tree.

So our humanity is found
Earth-rooted ever, yet love-crowned,
  Our life is in the heights and man
  Is like that grove in Hindustan,
    The banyan tree.

. . . . .

In ancient Kalikhat, where Hoogli bears
The commerce of the Ind to Southern Seas,
The mother Earth suckles her banyan children
With life streams that rise and flow
To fill with stateliness a thousand lofty arches
And roof with living green their myriad shades.
An undefined appeal is in that banyan grove:
Compounded of the sun and soil,
With roots to earth all turning,
Its leaf-lips sing dream-symphonies,
Like a sweet harp deep-ringing in the soul.
Its whispers blend like children's voices
Laughing low in eager happiness,
Yet is it filled with the serene immensities,
Life-lifted to the freedom of the stars.

O Temple-grove, thou seemest almost human!
Am I not, too, a thousand souls in one,
And thou my brother, friend, companion?
The soil of earth sustains us both,
The blight of hurricane, the blast of fire
Devastate both with death,
Yet here are both, despite the fire and flood,
In free, unconquered life, invincible.

O thou compassionate shelter in a weary land,
We too wave spirit-arms to greet the sun
And yearn for the inviolable blue.
Our lives shall be a resting-place
And covert from the heat upon that road
Whereon souls press to a great peace
And drink from everlasting fountains.

Ourselves, unrecognized in others,
Become our enemies. We smite our foes,
Wounding our own hearts with words and thoughts
That cut like scimitars. Our eyes
Turn selfward, kindly and indulgent;
Away from self, keen and suspicious.
We see life but in shreds and grasp at these,
Not knowing life is one.
Fear and unfaith divide us,
Blinding us to Love that longs to lift us all
To sun-sweep of all-oneness.

Great emblem of the cosmic powers,
Teach our blind hearts the vaster unities,
That we may gaze into that deep blue eye of love
That mortals name the sky,
And feel the heart-beat of the Universe.

1914

FRAGRANCE OF LOVE

She kissed His feet!
Those stainèd feet
Her tears had purified,
And fresh and clean and sweet,
With raven tresses dried.

She kissed His feet!
Her lips were now
As stainless as the dew,
Or star-flakes of the snow,
Or heaven's unsullied blue.

She kissed His feet!
Her Saviour's feet;
Least tribute for her cure;
To us, her message sweet:
"Love maketh all things pure."

1909

EVENING PEACE

The evening lays its golden bars
Across the empire of the blue,
And one by one the taper stars
Gleam silently to view.

Till all their tenderness and light,
The burning beauty of the whole
Cathedral of the spherèd night,
Is mirrored in the soul.

Now fade the glowing vesper bars
That gird the pillars of the west,
And all the lustres of the stars
Burn in their rooms of rest.

1923

THE GATES OF LIFE

The golden sun is crowning
  The hills with mellow light,
The dusky shades are falling—
  The eyelids of the night;
And like a low, sweet nocturn,
  Dream-whispers from the west
Thrill out their shadow-music
  And soothe the soul to rest.

When Nature sings to Nature
  And flowers to flowers nod,
The soul's quick ear is open
  To hear the voice of God—
Not in such stormful chaos
  As marked the dawn of time
When from their womb of thunder
  Surged the great suns sublime.

And not where the time-spirit,
  With urgence of desire,
Forges the constellations—
  Beats out new spheres of fire;
But in the soul's deep silence,
  Like host with velvet shod,
We hear the march of history,
  The silent feet of God.

We know earth's endless strivings
  And tears and wailings prove
That Love is ever climbing
  New Calvaries of Love.
And he that loveth never
  Is wasted in the strife;
Who worship self accomplish
  The tragedy of Life.

Far up the mount of beauty
  Fair stands the city wall,
The gates of God are open
  And life is free to all.
Abounding life unmeasured
  Is theirs and theirs alone
Whose lives are clearly sounding
  The universal tone.

I waken from the vision
  And all the hills are bright
With pink and rose and amethyst,
  A symphony of light;
And still, like sweetest nocturne,
  Dream-whispers from the west
Trill out their shadow-music
  And all is perfect rest.

1904

AS TURNS THE YEAR

Time and forgetfulness twin angels are;
  We do not half esteem their mute caress,
But turn us from their ministries afar
  To seek in grief the barren wilderness.

Time is a tender nurse that healingly,
  With gentle fingers, scarcely felt or known,
Veils the dull hours of shame and agony
  As mosses hide the stern face of a stone.

But when forgetfulness with dreamy eyes
  Strolls down her lethean path, woe disappears,
And every cloud that dimmed the morning skies
  Is blown into the caverns of the years.

1922

GREAT MUSIC

A storm of rare and unimagined sweetness—
  Accumulated treasure of the past
Comes sweeping down the avenues and vistas
  Of unremembered æons old and vast.

Prodigious energies and pent emotions,
  Till now unuttered through the ages long,
Have burst in music through the ancient flood-
      gates,
  Descending like an avalanche of song.

The phantom pains of prehistoric passions,
  The toilsome struggle up the hills of strife,
Weird shades of old heredities awakened,
  Teem down the years and through the gates of
      life.

Thus music, like a mystic incantation,
  Calls up time-spectres in a ghostly throng,
And with a voice of love and power transcendent,
  Encompasses the centuries in a song.

Or, like the sound of many distant waters
  When deep to deep across the ages calls,
The subtle thrill and pathos of great music
  Uplift the soul where'er its cadence falls.

It gathers tones of tender thought and feeling
  And blends them into one harmonious whole—
Eternal chords of perfect rest and healing,
  The surf-line music of the sea of soul.

1907

UNRENOWNED

Think not that the world's commanders
  Have won the heights alone;
We measure their matchless glory
  In deeds not all their own;
Though Phidias planned and ordered
  The Parthenon sublime,
Ten thousand helots fashioned
  That perfect dream of time.

Three hundred forgotten heroes
  Died in the fatal pass
Beside their immortal leader,
  The brave Leonidas;
And true as the great Columbus,
  Whose glory ever grows,
Was many a pilgrim father
  Whose story no man knows.

A myriad toilers founded
  The stately wall and tower
Of each immortal city
  That rose to fame and power;
And real renown fails never
  To honour with its own
The work of faithful comrades,
  Disclaiming to stand alone.

Then hail to the deathless army,
  The hero toilers all
Who dared the primeval forest
  And built the city wall,
Who fell in the battle of labour,
  Whose graves no quest can find;
These, these are the pride of the ages,
  The helpers of mankind.

1911

PRAYER

O thou whose finger-tips,
From out the unveiled universe around,
Can touch my human lips
With harmonies beyond the range of sound;
Whose living word,
All vital truth revealing,
My soul has stirred
To raptures holy, comforting and healing;
Beneath, around, above,
Breathe on me atmospheres
Of universal Love—
The music of the timeless years.
Upon my soul,
Pour vast eternities of might;
Up through my being roll
Deep seas of light
To urge me onward to the goal,
The Infinite, the Whole.

1915

OUTRIDERS OF THE SPIRIT

The soul that lives
Already has achieved eternity.
The world of sense is but
The wide horizon where appear
White sails and golden prows—
The swift outriders of the Spirit.
Reality is frozen in "matter,"—
Arrested there till we perceive
Its essence—eternal youth
Framed in the fixed impermanence of time.

1923

THIS VERY HOUR

If all the kind deeds never done
Should blossom into flower
The earth would be a paradise
This very hour.

And if the dear words never said
Found utterance to-day
The winter in a million hearts
Would turn to May.

If all our good intentions were
Pushed on to gracious deed
I think their power would promptly end.
The age of greed.

1923

THE IRON STRING

Love is an angel's deathless wing,
A golden harp with an iron string.

In every heart, some deep desire
Burns ever on, a quenchless fire.

The sturdy arm is every hour
Made stronger by its use of power,

And souls grow finer as they plod
Along the stern highroads of God.

The direst ills upon us wait
To usher through some lofty gate

That hope had never dared to try
Amid the hills of victory.

Like triple steel, love girds the will,
But keeps the spirit tender still.

The sweetest song has no refrain
More subtle than the minor strain.

Oh, hear the whirr of the deathless wing,
The golden harp with the iron string.

1911

THE POET'S PRAYER

Oh for a gale from the skies,
And oh for a wind from the sea
To quicken the soul when emotion dies
With a breath of eternity!

Oh for one luminous hour,
One sweep of immortal flame
To blaze a track into fields of power
Unmindful of fame or shame!

Oh for a love like the air,
So infinite, soundless and broad
That every child of the earth may share
The joy of the heart of God!

Oh for a flame of the light
To show me my life's deepest need,
To waken my soul from its languorous plight
And move to immortal deed!

Oh for a courage that fears
No thrust of adversity's lance,
Nor bends to the storm, but sturdily bears
The frownings of circumstance!

Oh for a gale from the skies,
And oh for a breeze from the sea
To cleave me a path that my wing may rise
On the winds of eternity!

1912

THE HILLS OF LIFE

Ere yet the dawn
Pushed rosy fingers up the arch of day
And smiled its promise to the voiceless prime,
Love sat and patterns wove at life's swift loom.

He flung the suns into the soundless arch,
Appointed them their courses in the deep,
To keep His great time-harmonies and blaze
As beacons in the ebon fields of night.
Love balanced them and held them firm and true,
Poised 'twixt attractive and repulsive drift
Amid the throngs of heaven. What though this power
Was ever known to us as gravity,
Its first and last celestial name is Love.

Love spake the word omnipotent, and lo!
Upon the distant and mid deep the earth
Was flung, robed in blue skies and summer lands,
Green-garlanded with leaves and bright with flowers,
While songsters fluttered in the rosy light.

But sometimes moaning through the dark-leaved pines,
Or wailing in the tempest-arch of night,
Or sobbing down the lonely shores of time,
Love moved unresting and unsatisfied.
The faces of the hills in beauty smiled,
The night's deep vault blazed with configured stars,
Fair nature throbbed through all her frame of light
And everywhere was Love's fine energy;
But fields and forests, flowers and firmaments
Had not attained to full perception of
Reality, so Love made human hearts

That mightily could feel and understand.
Made them His word on earth, His other self,
The high ambassadors of truth and light;
And Love was free where Life was wholly true.

Love tenanted in earth and made it fair,
In brain and nerve and heart, and made them man,
Incarnated in him the Brahmic bliss,
And reached in him the central peak of life,
Swept from the dark abyss of base desire
Up to the glory of the formless good.

Love gave the light of life, the crowning grace,
The universal peace, the mighty calm,
With strength and freedom of the cosmic soul
That swept all barriers down.

Of all the dreams
That found in earthly form, in rose-fringed cloud,
Or billowy light, expression of their life,
None was so perfect, passing speech and thought,
As that which gleamed in the fair human face,
The noblest form of earth that Love e'er knew,
The unexampled glory of His heart.

Each soul's love-hunger was some time appeased
By tributary from another soul.
These onward moved serene, and deep, and strong
As mighty streams that, blended into one,
Concurrent now, pour all their wealth of shower
And storm down one resistless course
Till both are merged into the common sea
Whose billows dash on every surf-worn shore
Beneath the stars.

But oft with vision dim,
Ere love had reached to life's meridian day,
Or man had plumbed the deeps of cosmic joy,
He worshipped at the shrine of fleshly form;
Adored alone the soul's rare tent of clay,
Mistook the empty channel for the stream;
In God's cloud-veiled pavilion, found not God;
Perceived not that the human face, though fair,
Is but the holy grail, the cup of life,
That to his lips brought Love's sweet sacrament.
The ministry of death had shown that form
Is evanescent,—only Love and light
Remain. Thus men had come by ways of death,
Into the open fields of life. At last
The filmy veil of forms was drawn aside,
And on the soul, life's splendid meaning burst,
Revealing forms as but containers rude,
That God had used and Love had glorified.
The soul had learned at last truth's final word:
That Love eternal is forever one,
Whether in crystal or the Soul of Christ.

No longer now were love-thrilled souls apart;
Star-distances might lie untracked between,
But never could transcend their love divine.
O'er all the space between them billows rolled
Elusive as those beams that make one day
Throughout the fields of heaven.

All human hearts
In one sublime communion now were joined,
Knew themselves one, and one with very God
By unity with all that perfect is.

Stern duty was transformed to joy of Love,
And all the lands were gardens of delight;
The song-bird nested safe among the hills,
The children laughed and played amid the flowers.
The man of honour now disdained to take
What all might not with equal service have;
All leisure was to high use consecrate,
And luxury no more debased the heart.
Love crowned each soul with some inspired art,
And into every life wealth richly flowed,
For Love was king, and rule of Love was law.

Then paled Orion and his mighty orbs
For, throbbing with a vibrant energy,
Love's far diviner billows swept in joy,
Through every fibre of the cosmic frame;
Life then was cloudless in its constant faith
And souls were all aglow with perfect love.

On swept the ages till the suns decayed,
Till bleached and bare, the dead bones of the worlds
Lay in the fields of heaven, till Mazzaroth
No longer flamed the zodiac with light
But strewed with cosmic slag, ashes of stars,
The lonely waysides of eternity.

Then old, at word of Love, gave place to new,
And ancient fear and night no longer reigned;
On earth no more was doubt, nor death, nor dark;
But Love made fairer realms, with nobler suns
And bluer skies and brighter firmaments,
And robed Himself in vesture of pure light.
So life was vibrant with all harmonies,
Each word was music, every pulse a prayer.

Then throbbing up the skies came silent chords
Writ in the angel's score, and human hearts,
Filled now with vital strength and poise, lived love
And practised truth with far intenser glow,
Yet with heroic magnanimity.

The ceaseless shuttle blends the fibres bright,
Weaving the purpose of Love's changeless heart,
The substance of His high enduring hope,
Into the fabric of the perfect whole;
Love's form, the Universe; His method, life;
His home, eternity.
1909

THE MEASURE OF A MAN

This is the twentieth century measure of a man:
He builds his life with love and gladness
Into the structure of the universe,
Co-operating with all true manhood
To make humanity sublime.
For he who doubts the earth and sky is infidel,
And he who is unbrotherly is guilty of all crimes.
To seize earth's gifts unearned is brigandage;
To hold for self what others may not win
By equal service to the commonwealth is treason.
He who exploits his brother,
Grasping with subtle, selfish art
What the kind Universe bestows on all
Is not yet man.
True manhood loves and labours for the common good,
Truth is its king, faith-keeping is its plan,
And Love its final law.
1911

L'ESPERANCE

Like phantom ships
That haunt the dim horizon with white shrouds,
We come, emergent from the mistral gloom,
Love-voyagers seeking a world of dream.

There is a spirit-music in the air,
Weird as the wind-harp's song;
Ethereal as night's auroral fingers,
Felt and heard until, with lull of alien victories,
Our child hearts sleep, and we are deaf to dreams.

But God hath yet a few with joy-wist eyes
And wonder-hearts, questing for undiscovered shores,
Whose eager gaze is towards the Isles of Truth,
Where visions new invite the soul
To larger, nobler life,
And challenge to a faith whose beacon fires
Have not yet embered to the ash of creed
That palsies reason.

O Comrades, live your vision, cherish dream:
If need be, wreck the towers of yesterday,
Scrap the dead past and build the future new.
So recreate the age.
Fill the whole world with justice, and transform
The arid desert of the world's desire
To gardens where heartsease and speedwell grow.
Pluck roses from the blushing cheek of dawn
While yet the paling stars of morning sing.

Love will not let the chords of life fall slack
And mute the harp. He holds more taut
The vibrant strings, till life is keyed to tones
Of high achievement, prudent vision, and a larger plan.

Then luxury—decay in masquerade—
Slinks out into the night and dies alone.

The firmament is all resplendent
With the smile of God.
The green bud bursts to instantaneous flower
And nature blushes crimson. Love has come
To bridge the gulf between us and that world
Where love knows Love,
And life is sane and sovereign.

There the dream comes true.
There men are noble, being sons of God,
To look on beauty with a seraph-eye,
And set the mother-heart of woman free,
That her madonna-consciousness may claim
For all her children unbegotten yet,
A nobler fatherhood, till Love and dream
Sing in her heart their joy-magnificat,
And give new birth unto new sons of God,
Born of a woman and the Holy Ghost,
And yet the son of man,—his saviour too.

O glorious vision of a perfect time!
One stroke of Love's great clock
Shall put to shame a thousand years
Of present happiness. There is no wealth but Love!
1916

THE COMING OF LIGHT

Down from her sun-dominion, to vision she flew,
    Limpid and clear
As a child's eyes wide with their wonder.
Soft was the drum of her pinion afar in the blue,
    As the hum of a bird
At the crimson lips of a flower, yet deeper toned
    Than the thunder.
1919

THOUGH ALL THE MUSIC

Though all the music in the world be dumb
  The vibrant heart still hears the impassioned song,
And when the storm is stilled, the foe o'ercome,
  The soul that spent its forces shall be strong.

All energies have rest for final fate;
  Grace is the goal of each disordered form;
Love is the full significance of hate
  And tenderness the meaning of the storm.

The fire is fire though there be no flame;
  The sun still shines though half the world is night,
And peace is but the brief and cunning name
  That veils the shock and fury of the fight.

The soul in leash of decorous decree
  Is still the wild arena of desire;
Though whipped to line of strict conformity,
  The flame still burns, still lives the raging fire.

Thus ever, strife is peace and calm is storm,
  And far is near, and near is out of sight;
The spirit gives the only real form
  To every phantom in its eerie flight.

1905

LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!

Two gifts I crave: the clear, far sight
  Of gleaming hills that sunward rise
To peaks illumined with the light
  Of clearer air and bluer skies;
And when I reach the billowy floor
  Of clouds that float above the height,
I ask for only one gift more:
  A fuller and more lustral light.

1923

UNFOLDING DREAMS

From vast pavilions cold and grey,
My winged thoughts upmounting fly;
"Press on," the cloud-horizons say,
"Your dreams are pathways up the sky."
"Press on," the beacon star-lamps tall
Of mighty constellations call.

A hundred thousand things I pass,—
Each is to me a thing apart,
A flake of snow, a blade of grass,
Its face I see, but not its heart;
I lack the magic cord that ties
All things I wis, to make me wise.

And yet a music sweet and dim
Swells often to a strain sublime,
As if the singing seraphim
Had drowned the thunder-tones of time,
And heaven were presently to show
The wonders that the angels know.

1920

THE SOUL'S BREATH

In the blue and clear pearl-ocean,
To the diver in his cell,
Comes the pure air to regale him,
But if atmosphere should fail him
Then the ocean deeps are hell.

So, Thou Source of Love and Power,
While in fields of earth we plod,
Give us atmospheres of healing,
Ever in our lives revealing
The refreshing sense of God.

1920

NIRVANA

The golden autumn sunset sheds over the land its light,
And dreams of peace come drifting into my soul to-night.

I hear the croon of Nature, her voices grave and gay,
But never so rich her music as at the close of day.

She soothes the pain and sadness and cools the fevered brow,
And says to the tired spirit: "I am resting to-night, rest thou.

"Let every storm of anguish that doth thy life befall
Fade like a vain illusion into the soul of All:

"The whirlwind of fierce passion, the blight of base desire
No more thy soul distressing, consumed in cleansing fire."

O glorious autumn sunset, the splendour of thy light
Like a restful dream is drifting into my soul to-night.

1906

THE SACRED HOUR

This is the hour when falls the fadeless light
  And hearts turn homeward, weariness oppressed,
To healing springs of sacramental night,
  To lofty sources of inspiring rest.

This is the hour when earth-lights disappear,
And starry openings through the night's dim walls
Let angel whispers steal upon the ear
While on the heart Love's perfect music falls.

This is the hour. Lo, all the space around
Is stilled to peace, and down the subtle air
No breezes stir, no step nor word nor sound,
But deep-souled eloquence is breathing there.

Now care and grief and loneliness depart;
Here life bursts forth to new, entrancing song,
The wistful silences with wonder start,
Confessing, though unseen, the angel throng.

The sacred hour, or past or yet to be,
Is when Love's presence to the soul is known;
Then all the universe is home to me,
And Love speaks low, and I am not alone.
1916

ONE CONSCIOUSNESS

One consciousness is all that is or evermore can be;
Are not the billows of the world one all-embracing sea?
With The Eternal I am one and only thus am free.
I rise superior to fate; I challenge fear, I forfeit ease;
I stand heroic and elate, and strong amid the eternities.
1907

CONSUMING FIRE

Glowing with fire of God,
A passion for his kind,
The artist chose those forms
That please men most,
And into them he flung
The splendour of his soul.
He touched the harp of God,
And from its strings
Waked sweeter strains
Than Orpheus drew
From his immortal lyre.
All cried: "Seraphic strains!"
"What perfect melody!"
"O witchery of art!"
For eye and ear were satisfied.
As perfect was his work
As 'twere for art's own sake.
So all forgot his theme
And praised its dress,
For each esteemed the pretty shell
More than the life within,
Stifled with beauty,
Strangled in its displaying.

Then did the artist's soul
Loathe all those forms, though beautiful,
With which his skill
Had veiled the face of God.
And thus he prayed: " O Love,
"Give me that subtler art
"That hides itself
"Behind Thy glowing face,
"Revealing what consumes its forms,
"Transfusing them with golden light.

"But if, perchance,
"Some form must needs appear,
"Let it be not too busy with itself
"To tell the flaming joy
"That fills it full
"Of God, and Heaven, and Love,
"All which are One."

1910

THE CASTAWAY

'Tis not indifference at nature's heart,
But big and boundless generosity,
That casts the lonely waif into the street,
Flings the stray flotsam on the foaming sea,
Or whirls the wingèd seed upon the wind.

Nature is mother to the vagabond;
Her sacred herald to new empires, he,
The morning star of ages yet to be.
The storms that sweep him from his chosen course
And drift him into strange adventurous seas
Are God-appointed opportunities
Designed to guide his prow to fair new strands,
To wider shores, to more ideal lands.

Each dire disaster is a new attempt
To turn some hero to his proper goal
Where he shall find reality, or die
Wrestling with angels in the fields of life
For heavens and harvests better than he sees,
Immortal dreams and wingless victories.

1911

NIGHT

Come, gentle Sister of the starry eyes,
With sable fingers open to our sight
Those fields of unimaginable skies—
Your vast demesne—Come, gentle Sister, Night.

Come in the silence. Let us hear afar
The tramp of Time's retreat, diminshed long,
Till night and quiet light and music are,
And in our souls is everlasting song.

1922

THE ADVENTURE

From weary days of hope and dread, and a constant yearning,
From tedious months of fitful mood and emotion turning,
From wonder and expectation till the man-child is leaping
Impulsive under the heart where new eras are sleeping,
Love turns to music of motherhood—an exquisite gladness
Of Spring and June-breath and song-bird's joy-madness,
Of life far deeper and vaster in vision and being and range,
In consciousness of creation, energy, ongo and change;
Then through the wild tempest of pain and labour and strife,
On, on to the stern and tremendous adventure of life.

1915

ONE LIFE MORE

Though the heart, in winter-white
  Cerements of snow,
Find no buds of young delight,
  No green hope-leaves grow;
All its flowers by sun and rain
  Burned to gold and red;
By the autumn wind-frosts slain,
  Faded, brown and dead;

Though the summer blossoms deep
  As the snowflakes fall,—
Ashes grey that drift and creep
  Out and over all;
Though we seem as painted pawns
  In the game—the strife,
Yet before us lie the dawns
  Of far-ranging life!

1923

UNSHEATHED

Lord of the wind and fire,
  In whose dread name
    All things are wrought,
Clothe me with large desire
  And ardent flame
    Of breathing thought.
That all the world may know
  Thy love and might,
    And be in awe,
Let me in beauty show,
  And pageant light,
    Thy perfect Law.

1922

DEAD GODS

Along the Nile the ancient psaltery sings
  Osiris' name no more;
No timbrel bell in court of Zion rings,
  Nor on the Kedron shore.

The old theogonies of Greece are dying;
  Olympus rears his head
Above the white reefs on the breezes flying,
  But all his gods are dead.

The strong divinities of faithful Roman
  Are in oblivion's tide,
And all the names and fames of classic omen
  From human hearts have died.

Albeit, the soul athirst for spirit union
  With some good power above,
In every life is longing for communion
  Of love with some great Love.

1916

BELLS OF BEING

Behind the curtain of form
  The bells of being ring,
And beyond the heart of the real
  There is not anything;

But Love is the music of being
  And Love is the soul of art,
And to live is simply to hear
  The whisper-beat of His heart.

1915

L'IMPROVISATEUR

Banish the sorrow out of my eyes,
Fill with thy courage my tortured heart;
Swing me sheer to the youth of the skies,
Flame me with fire of omnipotent Art.

Gird with the strength of an ancient hill,
Break from my soul every fetter and thong;
Bid the dumb, solemn earth, breathing so still,
Burst into cadence of billowy song.

Sing till the skies, impassioned with truth,
Shout to the scintillant stars as they roll;
Sing till I soar in Promethean youth,
Soar to the gates of my uttermost goal.

Fold me serene in your warm-hearted thought,
Hold me in faith till Hope find its wings;
Gladden with love, in trust falter not;
Breathe on the harp of my life till it sings.

1922

EFFLORESCENCE

The beauty brimming at the rosebud's heart
To longing stirs and warm intense desire;
Till all its fragrant petals flare apart
And incense rises out of crimson fire.

So faith and vision, out of Love's unrest,
Soar to the light and fadeless beauty find;
Desire has called an unsuspected guest
To blossom from the rosebud of the mind.

1922

THE LOST LAMB

(A Paraphrase)

What man of you, being a shepherd,
Doth lose but one lamb from the fold,
And fearing the wolf and the leopard,
The brambles, the dark, and the cold,
Though ninety and nine be safe sleeping
In lea of the sheltering wold,
Doth not go where the night winds are sweeping
To find the one lost in the cold?

And when in the wilds he hath found it,
Or near the storm-cataract's foam,
In his bosom, his arms folded round it,
Rejoicing he beareth it home;
And there he doth fully restore it
And heal every thorn-wound and smart,
While he bendeth tenderly o'er it
And holdeth it close to his heart.

1912

THE POET'S CORNER

The soul eludes the noisy pomp and glare
Of headlines sweeping o'er the page entire;
The tale of war and crime is written there,
Of fraud and faction and the wasting fire.

We turn the leaves until we reach the place
Whereon the music of the gentle rhyme
Is set half-buried in a little space
And find, perchance, a jewel of all time.

As sparkling as the eye of opal dew,
Though here among debris of baseness hid,
Back to the sun it flings its matchless hue,
More during than the oldest pyramid.

1922

THE SACRAMENT

The world was builded out of flame and storm.
The oak blast-beaten on the hills, stands forth
Stalwart and strong. The ore is broken, crushed
And sifted in the flaming crucible;
The remnant is pure gold. Brave hearts must dare
The billowy surge beneath the stern, white stars
To net the finny harvests of the sea:
No goal is won but some true hero dies.

In every toil there is a sacrament
And every service is a holy thing,—
Not unto him whose easy pence, unearned,
The treasure buys, but to the one who takes
The gift with reverence from that unknown
Who went forth brave and strong, came broken back,
But won for us a boon of priceless worth.

1914

THE GOD-SWEPT HEART

Though thou hast spread thy soul's bright wings afar
On the blue billows of the ether sea
Soaring through deeps of space elate and free;
Though thou hast seen the silvery evening star
Peer from the west through some wide-rifted bar
Of moon-fleeced vapour; though thy heart should be
Thrilled with the breathing of wild harmony
As when the wind sweeps through a deodar;

Thou canst not know nor can the angels tell,
Though hosts of light go forth to shout his laud
To mystic tones of dulcet harp and bell,
One note of all the loveliness of God;
Not though ten thousand thousand seraphs sing
The song of Love's eternal triumphing.

1920

MY HAND IN THINE

My hand in Thine, my heart Thy guest;
Take me, O Love, to the young-eyed West.
Out in the morning, side by side,
Our lofty wings shall onward ride
O'er mountain peaks of rest.

Healer and Friend, o'er the heaving breast
Of a weary world, despoiled, oppressed,
Curing its ills, be Thou my guide,
My hand in Thine.

Ever some higher, holier quest,
Ever some later and nobler best,
Ever more glad, I would still abide
In Thy great sun-transepts, vast and wide,
My hand in Thine.

1915

DISCOVERY

I sought Him in the minster where His name was sung;
In dim cathedrals where for Him great bells are rung;
In woods and hills I roamed and o'er the prairie broad,
To crowds and pageantries I turned and looked for God.
I sought Him in processions where the drums were heard;
In quiet valleys listened to the song of bird;
But never could I find Him in home or street or mart
Till I searched the secret places of the wonder in my heart;
And when I there discerned Him and His unchanging care,
I looked abroad once more and found Him everywhere.

1923

THE DAWN OF NIGHT

(On Mount Hamilton)

I.

Now swings our mighty circle up the sky—
  The great equator climbing to the sun
  That thrills in voice of flame: "The day is done!"
Across yon darkening sea—vapours that lie
O'er Santa Clara's vale—our Pisgah eye
  Discerns the day's eclipse. No solemn gun
  Proclaims the obsequies, nor even one
Earth voice is heard to tell us night is nigh.

High in the zenith, o'er our bastion burns
  A timid star—'tis Alpha of the Harp.
  Now gathering light, she sings out clear and sharp,
While every ear to her soft lyric turns:
  "Cease, child of earth, each helpless plight to nurse,
And hear the music of the universe."

II.

The white moon rising, floods the cloudy floor
  With fleecy billows, spreading wide and far
  A sea of silver with no coast to bar
Its shining verges. On the hither shore,
Great domes arise as from the earth's deep core
  To turn our sight where God's blue heavens are,
  And urge our souls, by vision of each star,
Into the higher atmospheres to soar.

Beneath our mountain-wings, a sea of gloom
  Spreads o'er the earth its blight of war, its flood
  Of desolation, pestilence and blood,
But all above those clouds of dread and doom
  Is star-lumed peace that robes the vaster night
  In garniture of universal light.

1922

RENAISSANCE

A tributary clean and strong
  Into a stream of green-hued slime,
Burst with the thunder of its song
  And swept away the reek and grime,
    Till, clear of murk, the river free
    Ran laughing, singing to the sea.

The sluggard stream of human thought
  Is murky now with taint and mire,
For weeds of selfishness are caught
  In turbid pools of base desire,
    And all the roads of life and deed
    Are tragic courses of our greed.

Ah, would some tributary tide,
  In this our age that needs it so,—
A river from the mountain side,
  Into the world-stream burst and flow,
    And bring to beauty life-release
    To fill our age with art and peace.

And who can tell if you and I
  Who dream of beauty, truth and song,
May every ugliness defy
  Of private greed and social wrong:
    Till life's broad river glad and free
    Run laughing, singing to the sea.

1923

A HYMN FOR CANADA

(Tune: O Canada!)

Lord of the lands, beneath Thy bending skies,
On field and flood, where'er our banner flies,
  Thy people lift their hearts to Thee,
    Their grateful voices raise:
  May our Dominion ever be
    A temple to Thy praise.
Thy will alone let all enthrone;
Lord of the lands, make Canada Thine own!

Almighty Love, by Thy mysterious power,
In wisdom guide, with faith and freedom dower;
  Be ours a nation evermore
    That no oppression blights,
  Where justice rules from shore to shore,
    From Lakes to Northern Lights.
May Love alone for wrong atone;
Lord of the lands, make Canada Thine own!

Lord of the worlds, with strong eternal hand,
Hold us in honour, truth and self-command;
  The loyal heart, the constant mind,
    The courage to be true,
  Our wide-extending empire bind,
    And all the earth renew.
Thy name be known through every zone;
Lord of the worlds, make all the lands Thine own!

1913

HIGHROADS

I ask not when my skies are clear
  That greys shall never gloom their arch;
No fruitage comes till clouds appear
  And over wide horizons march;
    But be my skies of faith alway
    As clear as noon of summer day.

I pray not that my path shall lie
  In flowery meads beside the sea;
I'd build upon the mountains high
  White towers of immortality;
    I only ask that I may know
    The roads on which my feet should go.

And when each day my toils are done,
  Ere this white chrysalis shall break,
Released to roads of light and sun,
  May I that raptured life partake
    Which from its veils of vast surmise
    Shall burst to freedom of the skies.

1923

LOVE AND THE UNIVERSE

LOVE AND THE UNIVERSE

I.

I dreamed that I was God, the great All-seeing;
The ceaseless urge was mine
That fires the throbbing, blood-red heart of Being,
The Alchemist divine.
I saw and knew that lesser good is evil,
The evil lesser good;
That love can change the basest hell-upheaval
To human brotherhood.

I heard the tramp of onward-marching nations,
I saw their mirth and tears;
I felt the passions of the generations
That thundered down the years;
I clashed as foe with foeman, fire-hearted,
I heard the war-guns boom,
And in the deep abyss of years departed,
I found a nameless tomb.

And I was woman, felt her degradation,
Marked how her wrongs began,
The justice of her claims, their violation;
I saw her slave to man.
I felt the wounds of haughty condescension
My tender heart annoy;
I was the fire beneath each cold convention,
Of motherhood, the joy.

When souls oppressed with sense of sin knelt pleading,
I felt their bitter shame;
When priests with bigot creeds, my words misreading,
Blasphemed my very name,
My heart misunderstood was bleeding, breaking,
The penitent to show
How I was yearning, all things else forsaking,
To his relief to go.

I lived in superstition's dark dominions
And saw her cruel deeds,
The Calvaries of new and brave opinions,
The martyrdom of creeds;
I bowed my cosmic soul to wealth and fashion,
In commerce revelled now;
I wreathed with wisdom's halo of dead passion
My philosophic brow.

I was the ancient East, whose pomp and splendour
Went down in shame and lust,
And I the power from her base course to bend her
And trample her in dust;
But when the sunset cities newly rising
Stood selfishly apart,
I was the modern East, the world surprising
With renaissance of art.

The separating prejudice of races,
The temper of their souls,
The North, the South, the colour of their faces,
Their pathways and their goals;
All these was I, the Spirit of the Ages,
The meaning of them all,
I penned the word of doom on life's stern pages,
The writing on the wall.

And Love was mine, the joy and power supernal
To make the loathsome ways
That rise up from the deeps of gloom infernal
With heavenly lustre blaze;
Hope too came fresh into the bright arena,
And faith was born anew;
My soul illumined with divine arcana
To Godlike stature grew.

The government of men was on my shoulders,
Their onward march I planned;
Mine was the wealth of earth despite its holders,
The gold in every land.
I was the body and the soul of all things
In industry and art;
For me the world had no more great or small things
Since all were in my heart.

The cosmic plan was good whate'er appearance
Might need my chastening rod;
My law was just and brooked no interference
Or blame—was I not God?
For law was love-wise purpose everlasting
In cosmic sentence writ,
And duty, the demand of love, outcasting
All but the soul of it.

Yet man, allured by fame or fortune's leading,
His brotherhood forgot,
And all the yearning of my heart unheeding,
My Love remembered not;
And thus amid the splendours of my heaven,
Reproach and wrong were there,
Injustice and oppression unforgiven,
And forms of life unfair,

Then all humanity in love-surrender,—
  Its blight of scar and blot,
I poured into Love's all-consuming splendour,
  The cosmic melting-pot.
Then slowly rose such majesty of feeling,
  Such clear-eyed vision too,
That all the ills of life found perfect healing
  And earth was made anew.

The partisan subdued his petty passions,
  The miser spent his hoard,
The haughty heart despised its futile fashions
  And nations sheathed the sword;
For all was Love, the central soul of being,
  The all-embracing stream,
The fountain-head of joy, the eye all-seeing—
  Such as my wondrous dream.

Then, in the mystery of the blue high spaces
  And clouds of fleecy hue,
I came awake, and gazing on men's faces,
  I found my dream was true.
The dream was true; manhood and God forever
  Essentially are one,
Just as the ingle-fire you cannot sever
  From its high source—the sun.

And as the spaciousness that is the ocean
  To other lands invites,
Life bears the soul with strong resistless motion
  To Love's celestial heights,
And dares the darkness till the great confession
  Of sun-flame breaks, reborn,
And brings the soul a new, divine expression
  Upon the lips of morn.

For life cannot be sounded with a plummet:
  The sum of all man's deed
Is less than man, nor can it reach a summit
  Sublimer than his creed.
'Tis vision, faith and courage make men greater
  In Love's resistless plan;
No Bliss of the Eternal All-Creator
  Can drift apart from man.

Henceforth, I give free course to faith and freedom,
  With justice banish strife,
Relieve the fallen, am as Christ to lead them
  And love them into life;
Till earth, transformed by labour, joy and pity,
  A home of comrade hearts,
Shall rise and shine in every land and city
  With unexampled arts.

Henceforth whate'er the cup of time containeth
  Of evil, pain or strife,
The power of Love, long as the earth remaineth
  A crucible of life,
Shall lift the soul on far-uprising pinions
  In heaven's ethereal sea,
To dwell forever in the bright dominions
  Of Love's eternity.

I seek no lethean stream of self-forgetting
  To hide me in its wave,
No gem-oasis in its desert-setting,
  No lotus-dream I crave;
But life athrill, unfettered and abounding,
  Free as the winds are free,
Fresh as the vernal forest, breeze-resounding,
  Deep as the blue-domed sea.

Let every soul beneath the star-strewn ceiling
  For life's own sake be free;
Flame every beacon fire, set joy-bells pealing
  From hills of victory;
For as the eagle to his eyry soaring
  Along the crags of time,
In Love's high service every power outpouring,
  All life shall be sublime.

. . . . . .

II.

I dreamed again, and lo, a solemn glory
  Transfigured earth and sea;
The vibrant universe revealed a story
  Of love and power to me.
Oh, never was such light on earth beholden,
  Save when the sacred gleam,
Upon the spirits of the seers olden,
  Breathed mystery and dream.

I think that haply angel hands had chancèd
  The door of some bright zone
Of heaven to open, so to me there glancèd
  The radiance of the throne.
'Twas not as earth-light that must go unbending
  Into the fields afar,
But all diffuse, it spread abroad unending
  And circled every star.

Upon my consciousness was strange appealing
Of unseen presence borne;
I walked alert with glow of comrade-feeling
Through all the peaceful morn.
I knew a master hand the leaves was tinting
In gold and crimson tone;
A face of beauty all the earth was glinting
With glory not its own.

Where Neptune's breath the salty spray is sweeping
Along the silent seas
There dwells the God of gods whose will unsleeping
Moves the eternities.
I peer into the blue serene above me
Where constellations roll,
And find a Power that cares for me and loves me,
The Keeper of my soul.

And where, unseen within the stellar spaces,
The soundless ether stream
Flows on among the worlds and shows no traces
Of life or death or dream,
Intenser vision, down the deep ways turning,
Is startled to surprise,
Emotion, will and consciousness discerning
Throughout the far-flung skies.

And not in vastness only, I discovered
A Soul of love and might;
Above the dew-drop on the grass-blade hovered
The clear shekinah light.
As in the daisy's or the rose's petal
His praises never cease,
The noisome insect and the stinging nettle
Are temples of His peace.

For sorrow is a messenger of pity
  That hasteth from the strife
To usher us, though joy hath fled the city,
  To higher planes of life.
Greater than pain they grow who bravely suffer
  Beneath the stinging rods,
And stronger are their thews, their sinews tougher,
  Who wrestle with the gods.

Soul of the Universe! expression waiteth
  An ampler word than mine;
The noblest human utterance abateth
  A splendour so divine.
No speech could ever tell the radiant story
  Of love and truth and law;
I would my words might even hint the glory
  That in my dream I saw:—

The Universe is God, and all is heaven
  That wins into the height;
Ills are by justice healed and good is leaven
  To fill the worlds with light.
The Universe is form and grace and beauty—
  All this in dream I saw—
Is godlike strength and great-souled love and duty,
  Is firm but kindly law.

The Universe is truth, falsehood consuming,
  Is light, the hells to chase
Out of the minds of men, their souls illuming
  With visions of God's face.
The Universe is power. The gross things even
  That all our spirits mar,
And all the elements they blend and weave in
  To make them what they are,

Are wholesome symbols of our birth, agreeing
That God and man are one;
The vinculum that binds our outer being
In union with the sun.
Thus man, the creature, too is universal,
Awhile in bonds of sense;
His life on earth at best a time-rehearsal
Until his faring hence.

Babe at earth's mother-breast, soon to inherit
The larger life above;
One with the unseen Fountain of all Spirit,
The Universal Love.
So is our manhood child of God essential,
Still kept in swaddling bands,
To grow to final Christhood all-potential,
Within the Potter's hands.

To be the potter in increasing measure
Is man's predestined part,
Co-worker with the Universe and treasure
Immortal of its heart;
Sharing its fortunes, physical, eternal,
Rising to highest goal
To live on spirit planes, august, supernal,
As partner of the Whole.

I feed my soul with reverence and wonder,
With mystery, truth and art;
With starlight and with storm, with dew and thunder
I nourish my young heart;
Grow sturdy in the struggle, bold and fearless
On universal seas,
In all vicissitudes of sorrow, tearless,
Patient on Calvaries.

So build my spirit out of things supernal,
My food, love, light and dream,
My breath, the Infinite, my lamp eternal,
The co-eternal Beam.
No more my soul gropes in the dark, unseeing,
Or trembles in the night,
No longer turns to others; my own being
Is love and power and light.

I pierce the mists before my sunrise drifting;
My soul is dark no more,
My hope anew its radiant altars lifting
On every life-lit shore.
Meanwhile the Universe new bodies finds me
And calls me to resign
Each instrument of life that frees or binds me
For one more subtly fine.

I hear each note of nature's music breathing,
Each song of mountain pine,
Each bird-voice with the whispering winds enwreathing
Some prophecy of mine.
The resonance of cataracts o'er reaches
Of precipice and gorge,
The thunders of the billows on their beaches,
The glacier's downward urge,

The voiceless symphony of moor and highland,
The rainbow on the mist,
The white moon-shield above the slumber-island,
The mirror-lake, star-kist,
The life of budding leaf and spray and branches,
The dew upon the sod,
The roar of downward-rushing avalanches,
Are eloquent of God.

My eye sweeps far-extended plains of vision
  And golden seas of light;
Upon my ear fall cadences Elysian
  Like music in the night;
The Universe for me is ever weaving
  New bodies from the sun
Thrilled with the awe and gladness of perceiving
  That God and man are one.

No hostile force can e'er again affright me
  Or prove me undivine;
The Universe will send no foe to fight me.
  Are not its conflicts mine?
I feel the sweep of the immortal battle;
  The storm-wind o'er the vast;
The lightning in my soul—the thunder's rattle
  Blares like a northern blast.

How shall the Universe its own creation,
  Life of its life destroy?
How bring to nothingness or desolation
  The soul of its own joy?
The echo of itself, not merely fashioned
  Of clay, God's outer part,
But fibre of His being, love-impassioned,
  The glory of His heart!

Drive on, then, winds of God, drive on forever
  Across the shoreless sea;
The soul's a boundless deep, exhausted never
  By full discovery.
In storm or calm, that soundless ocean sweeping
  Is still the sailor's goal;
The destiny of every man is leaping
  To birth in his own soul.

TO WORLDS MORE WIDE

TO WORLDS MORE WIDE

The rapier lightnings flashed
Their dirks of fire;
The thunders rumbled——crashed!
A wild storm-choir.

"God, I am sore afraid
Before Thy skies;
Sheathe Thou Thy furious blade
Ere courage dies."

Love spake in every form
Beneath the blue:
"My child, I made the storm
For love of you."

. . . . .

I.

The choral pines to the wild winds are singing,
A weird Æolian strain,
Aloft their green imperial branches swinging
In sunshine, dark and rain,
Through all the patient centuries outflinging
Their litanies of pain.

Stern atmospheres and lashing storms enfold them
And robes of ancient night;
The rock-sills of the solid planet hold them
And swing them to the light;
They whisper dreams—the dreams the mountains told them,
The great peaks tipped with white.

Dreams of the story of their own creation—
How from a burning mist
Love forged a bulwark in each fiery station
Howe'er His wisdom wist,
And flaming billows on each rock-foundation
Broke wild and seethed and hissed!

Then all the sons of God smote on the lyre
Some strain of praise to try;
The morning stars, a great celestial choir,
Together sang on high,
And lurid peaks that split the winds of fire
Bulged sheerly up the sky.

The pines had heard the mountains tell the story;
Long ere our feet had trod
The hillsides in their wealth of summer glory
Or pressed the velvet sod
The waves were beating on the bastions hoary
The whisper-dreams of God.

Dreams of a time ere yet the years were numbered,
Before the mountains were,
Long ere an eagle's nest the crags had cumbered
With nested eaglet's care,
While every primal form of life yet slumbered
In sea and fire and air.

But burning mist was all, and all was motion
Within a spherèd dome,
The earth an eddy in a flaming ocean,
A spume of fire and foam,
A prophecy of Love's unplumbed devotion
When earth should be our home.

A whirling chaos, rapture-thrilled,
Love's tabernacle stood;
His chariot was the hurricane,
His highway was the flood.

His hand of power shook tempests forth
In whirlwinds fierce and warm;
The lightnings fled before His face,
His vesture was the storm.

One heart, one life, one urge sublime,
One all-creative Soul
Impassioned all the universe
And glorified the whole.

The storm was life-expression. Canst thou wonder
Knowing the might of Love,
With no repressive power to hold it under,
No stern restraint above,
That Love should wildly burn and rage and thunder,
And like a tempest move?

Love is the source of life from everlasting
To everlasting years;
When seas dashed hissing on the rocks and blasting
The solid granite piers,
'Twas life chaotic huge rock-masses casting
Into its own salt tears.

Here all was life ere life to forms was broken,
Here God Himself seemed young;
Eternal wisdom had not found a token,
Love had not yet a tongue;
The earth was still a word of life unspoken,
A song of love unsung.

Here thought and feeling, soaring and ascending,
The sunshine glowing warm,
The stately cedar on the hill-top bending,
Each lovely floweret form,
With all the harmonies of time were blending
In that primeval storm.

But life, the elemental forms essaying,
Climbed ever, ever higher
On roads of victory, anew displaying
Some basic, fixed desire,
While each time-spirit on life's forms was laying
Its tribulum of fire.

Within each part there brooded the great Spirit
Awaiting that glad hour
When, bursting from its bonds, earth should inherit
The glorious wisdom-flower,
And Love should lift the race to Christly merit,
And pain awake to power.

Love blossomed by the brooks in valleys vernal,
In lilies smiling fair;
He hid within the acorn's tiny kernel,
And lordly oaks were there;
In human flesh, and lo, the life eternal
'Tis ours with Love to share!

In the stars that gem the blue
Of the night,
In the storm and in the dew,
There is light;
In the clouds that split with thunder,
In the soul athrill with wonder,
Over all and through and under,
There is Love and Light.

In the moon-gleam on the sea
There is power,
In the suns and nebulae,
In the flower;
In the soul of pure desire
Present always to inspire
Like a throne of pillared fire,
There is Love and Power.

And thus the footfall of forgotten marches
Comes faintly down the breeze,
The rustling leaf-songs of the firs and larches
Blend their joy-minstrelsies;
They sing the runes of ancient forest arches,
The chansons of old seas.

With odours of the orient and the sighing
Of sylvan lutes, the song
Of birds, the beat of angel pinions flying,
The surges breaking strong
On moaning beaches, breezes lingering, dying
Amid the fir-tree throng,

They tell how Love, in mighty tribulation
Long ere our lives began,
Nailed Nature to the cross, a true oblation,
In some divine, dim plan,
And raised again in thrilling exaltation,
This blue-arched home for man.

Such was the song that drifted down the ocean
And stirred the ancient pine;
Such was the urge and promise of devotion
To Love's supreme design
That moved in billows of intense emotion,
Primordial, divine.

And all that lurid pageant of existence
Was force unsubjugate,
A life potential dreaming of persistence,
The dream that we call fate,
And whirling, reeling down ethereal distance
In flaming robes and state!

. . . . .

II.

In mount or vale, throughout the changeful year,
From all the by-ways of the world, I peer
Into the secret places where they wind
Almost beyond the utmost reach of mind,
And beauty, beauty everywhere I find.

"O why," I asked, "doth Nature in such wealth
Lavish her jewels, hide them as by stealth,
The wondrous treasures of her artist soul
In opulence outpour, and o'er the whole
Great wilderness of worlds her splendours roll?"

From jungles only to the wild things known,
From waste karroo, from forest deep and lone,
From icy north, and from each starry flame
That looks into the ocean's mirror-frame,
One clear and universal answer came:

"The Soul of All is beautiful; then why
Should Nature anywhere in earth or sky
Fall from her high estate? If it should be
One wild flamingo by an unknown sea
Found God unbeautiful, no God were He!"

Eternal Beauty will have all things under
His own majestic form;
He shapes their plastic souls to dreams of wonder
With sledges of the storm,
In fires of life, on anvils of the thunder,
His Love the changeless norm.

So Life is making beautiful and tender
All spirits that aspire,
Conformed by faith and hope, however slender,
To Love's supreme desire;
He makes the children of the gleam a splendour
In His refining fire.

The mother of a great love-consummation
In some low manger lies;
Lo, all the prophets of illumination
Have heard her travail-cries.
Joy to the world when for its full salvation
A Christed nation dies!

The peaks of life have deep and dark foundation
And strong granitic sills
That feel the hammer-stroke and take formation
And fashion as Love wills,
That all the tribes may build their habitation
Upon His purple hills.

And ever when the breezes soft are singing
Where pines the forest gird,
They tell the anguish that Love's soul is wringing,
They speak the fateful word,
The story that the foaming seas are bringing,
The song the mountains heard.

They sing of Nature each new problem solving
Since time on earth began,
They show the Power omnipotent resolving
Love's wonderful life-plan,
And celebrate humanity evolving
From moneron to man.

The starry cross stands on the hill of daring
And calls to toilsome steeps;
Life beckons to the hero onward faring
Whose way is in the deeps,
Who, looking to the goal and not despairing,
The onward pathway keeps.

And ever down the rugged courses winding
Where dangers fierce enfold,
The eye of faith the priceless pearl is finding
In waters wild and cold;
The stones of fate the patient ores are grinding,
For He must have pure gold.

The stalwart heart still dares the ocean surges
Beneath the winter stars;
The sword of conflict still injustice purges
Upon the shield of Mars,
And brave Discovery still its voyage urges
Beyond the western bars.

The morn shall break to love and life transcendent,
And bring us free and strong,
Where clad in robes of purity resplendent,
The souls of beauty throng,
And visioned hosts in joy and light attendant,
Uplift the voice in song:

O Love is a city whose gates of pearl
Swing wide to the vales of peace,
Where sun-rays fall on the ivory wall
In whispers of care-release;
A land where the viewless light reveals
No deed that the love-life mars,
But hearts are free as the heart can be,
And true as the faithful stars.

There all are glad for their souls are brave,
And free for their lives are true;
No storm-wind flies down the halcyon skies
To flutter the star-flamed dew;
But odours drift from the wildwood bowers
With dreams to the soul of Art,
And Beauty sings of immortal things
To those who are pure in heart.

O City of Love with the golden towers,
Thou land of the viewless light,
Thy gates are wide; none is love-denied
Though he dwell in the tents of night.
We open our souls to the great life-call
That whispers of care-release,
And flags unfurl o'er the gates of pearl
As we enter Love's Land of Peace.

Eternal Love begets the child of glory
In agony and tears;
O'er Marathon and Marne, though red and gory,
The morning star appears,
And echoes of the angel song and story
Drift down the patient years.

The hearts of men shall never more be fearing
The horror-trump of war,
For now the larger Christmas-dawn is nearing,
And wise men see afar
Above the low horizon-line appearing
The comrade-nation's star.

The Christ is born in larger soul-expression
And lives of vaster peace;
We find new love-lands of serene progression,
Nor shall we ever cease
From vision of new truth in sure succession
Of courage and release.

The holiest, happiest hour for man or nation
In all the storied past
Was when from some deep blight of obscuration
The morn broke forth at last
And all the glory of each constellation
Hid in the opal vast.

So, through the world's long travail unaffrighted,
Hope taketh heart again;
Are not the lamps of faith ofttimes relighted
At some dim torch of pain?
There never was a human soul benighted
That suffered aught in vain.

The might that wastes, the will that hurls disaster,
Shall fall before the light,
Shall bow the heart to Love, the only Master,
And worship in His sight,
And life shall larger grow and vision vaster
By living in the height.

The sorrows of the ever-toiling lowly
Oppressed by greed and wrong,
Who build and beautify our temples holy,
And labour hard and long,
Have lifted man, though painfully and slowly,
To heights of strength and song.

The agonies and moanings of the ages,
The griefs the centuries hold,
The nameless cruelties on history's pages
Too tragic to be told,
Are birth-pangs of a race of lover-sages
Who bring the age of gold.

There shall be noble joys beyond the telling
When Love's benignant will
To music of kind deeds is rising, swelling,
And every heart's athrill
With gladness in each humble wayside dwelling
On every peaceful hill.

Though thunders roar in volleyed conflagration,
And storm the planet sweeps,
Love hath a warrant and a compensation
If but one mother keeps
Her faithful watch in loving consecration
While her dear baby sleeps.

Though hurricanes of hell sweep down the water
And beat upon our coasts,
Though myrmidons of flame and arms of slaughter
Breathe out their brutal boasts,
And babe and mother, sister, wife and daughter,
Assault with vandal hosts;

Though Love lead upwards, now through wildest surges,
Anon through fiercest fire,
Each new successive renaissance emerges
From desolations dire;
What matters, hell or heaven, if Love but urges?
On, on to Love's desire!

The echoes of the heavenly voices calling,
Sonorous, sweet and clear,
Drift down the starless dark no more appalling
Though once so rife with fear,
Till on our souls the peace of God is falling
And we the angels hear.

The seraph-music hymns its joy-thrilled warning
Across the deep-arched dome;
The sages see Love's star the skies adorning
O'er continent and foam;
The child is born; this, this is God's great morning.
The age of light is come!

1916

MOOD-DRIFT

MOOD-DRIFT

SOUL-LIFTED

Crowd back the hills and give me room,
Nor goad me with the sense of things;
Earth cramps me like a narrow tomb,
Your sunlight is too dense for wings;
Away with all horizon bars;
Push back the mountains and the stars.

1920

UNREVEALED

I care not what your age;
Turn but another page,
And you shall know
You have not known
The depth of Love's
Great undertone.
The song of life forever young
Is in your heart as yet unsung.

1920

INVINCIBLE

He who would win must *be* a victory,
He who would shine, a star;
Good luck, to sense is contradictory;
The conquerors of time self-conquerors are.

1923

STAR-MELODIES

Through all the dissonance that mars
  The harmony of time,
I hear the pibroch of the stars
  Burst forth in tones sublime:
It is the music of that lyre
  That out of chaos flung
Its wail of melody and fire
  While yet the world was young.
And whensoe'er earth's shadow bars
  The highway of the light,
The cadence of the silver stars
  Comes throbbing down the night.

1922

THE GIFT

(Theme from Alex. Black)

"What gift for Christmas do you wish:
A globe of pretty golden fish,
  A lamp or vase or locket;
A picture or a painted dish,
  Or a sovereign for your pocket?"

"Bend down your ear—you must not miss
One syllable or word of this;
  To no one else I'd trust it:
Give me, dear one, a tender kiss—
  I shall not need to dust it."

1923

THE DEATH-BRINGER

A word was spoken—a breath of frost
Struck love with an icy chill;
Two hearts went limping, joy was lost
And wandered lone on a tempest hill.
The flowers of the soul their petals shed;
Music was silent and art fell dead.

1921

A GRUB WITH WINGS

A butterfly, from chrysalis emerged,
To soar into the atmosphere was urged,
But would not try. "I am a worm," she cried,
And thus she crawled, a grub until she died.

Oh! Psyche is not Psyche till she flings
The earth away beneath her flaming wings,
Or soars into the common, crowded mart
In mystic veils and halo hues of Art.

1922

ENCIRCLING CHOIRS

Ablaze in glorious tracks of light,
Along their fiery orbits swing
A thousand constellations bright;
"Make way for God," they sing.

1921

JOY'S OVERTONE

The morning spreads great wings of light
O'er sea and sod,
And breathes to the awakening soul
The sense of God.

The air is one that bends the flower
Or storms the oak,
So art and love are one in all
Us human folk.

1921

GRIEF'S UNDERTONE

Joy-throats dilate in the woods;
The meadows are blithe with their cheer,
But in all the bliss of the singing birds,
One voice I hear.

I listen among the trees;
It sings while the breeze rushes on,
And ever it tells in the moaning seas
Of days that are gone.

1920

LOVE-CROWNED

True lovers are omnipotent:
They step from peak to peak,
From star to star
In happy pilgrimage,
To the kind Universe alone, responsible.

1920

CORONAL EVE

Trembling stars of the wide-arched night,
  Hill and stream and the ancient woods;
You and I and the inner light
  Out with God in His solitudes.

1921

CRY OF THE EARTH

Roars the machine of the city—
  Commerce and noise and war;
Gentleness, grace and pity
  Crushed by the hammer of Thor!
Beauty and music and silence—
  God! What is life for?

1921

SCAR-WRITTEN

If I could write that wonder-book
  So long imprisoned in my soul
In one bright word that all might look
  And find God's thought upon the scroll,

My life should be that perfect sign;
  I'd live the book with love unbarred;
In golden deed I'd set the line,
  Though writ in blood and battle-scarred.

1921

RONDEL

Turn back, O Chariot of time,
And bring my youth again to me,
Take all the glitter of my prime,
But leave me sweet simplicity.

From gilded phrase of pharisee,
From pious semblance, mock-sublime,
Turn back, O Chariot of time,
And bring my youth again to me.

Some Ariel wand, some magic rime,
With mystic art the change decree,
Transform me till once more I climb
For cherries in the garden tree.
Turn back, O Chariot of time,
And bring my youth again to me.

1907

NOT IN PALACES

O not in palaces of pride
Are love and faith most surely found;
Where peace and lowliness abide
Is ofttimes holier ground.

I deem the honest heart of him
Who turns the brown soil to the sun
And keeps a cottage neat and trim
By far the happier one.

With him is e'er the noblest art,
A faithfulness no might can bend;
His surest peace, a lowly heart,
His truest wealth, a friend.

1917

THE HOUR OF THE VALLEY

God, I am tired,
And pain gnaws at my heart,
Yet will I greatly live some noble part;
Trusting the good
Throughout the long, lone years,
Even though my life's young blood
Be thinned to tears.

1921

VINTAGE

When the creed begins to throttle
Life-expression, love-endeavour,
Save the wine, but scrap the bottle;
Love must be our light forever.

But the word must be the new one,
Gleaming and forever glowing,
And the vine must be the true one,
Every year new blossoms showing.

1922

MAN

Hero of unknown story,
He sweeps through the gates of birth;
Heir of an untold glory,
He bids farewell to the earth;
An irised vapour of thought,
A rainbow mirrored in dew,
A cloud in a sunbeam caught
Adrift in the blue.

1917

THE HOMELIGHT

Ah, there is one light
Brighter than sunlight;
  Fairer and clearer
    Its beautiful ray;
Restful as twilight,
Star-twinkling high-light,
  Lovelier, nearer
    And dearer than they:

Hearthlight and homelight,
After the foam white,
  After the tossing
    O'er life's storm-swept way;
Here is the one light
Brighter than sunlight,
  Lovelier, clearer
    And dearer than day.

1916

THE RAINBOW

The sunbeams painted a rainbow
On the mist floating over a valley,
And a child and a sage lookt upon it.

Then the mist found language, thus speaking:
"Lo, all eyes shall behold now my beauty."

The child saw the beautiful bow,
The sage, the broken-rayed light,
But the soul that was throbbing within it,
The fount of its loveliness, waited unseen,
And longing, and lonely.

Then the clouds hid the sun-rays from vision,
And tears of rain fell. Love was weeping.

1917

ART AND LIFE

Art is a world of beauty
  Serene as a summer night,
Where Love is the lord of duty,
  And faith is the only light.

Life is a weaver to fashion
  Dreams from a golden skein
With instruments of passion
  And ministries of pain.

1917

WINTER'S KISS

The flowers are dead that starred the summer sod;
The hillsides sleep beneath the breath of God;
  The moon that sailed so queenly down the night
  Peers through a silver veil of misty light;
    The morning rises o'er the land and lo,
    A sacred, mute astonishment of snow!

1921

THE WISH

If I were wishing you, dear friend,
  The crown of all my golden wishes,
It should not be that Heaven would send
  Expensive raiment, dainty dishes;
Nor would I wish you towers in Spain,
  Nor pearls from Ceylon or from Siam,
But every year a jolly train
  Of just such friends as I am.

1923

EVANESCENCE

The ancient stars their sentry keep,
  The winds of God still blow;
The ocean smites its rocky steep,
The hills sublime are mantled deep
  In everlasting snow.

But time has turned man's towers to dust;
  His hosts with iron shod
And all the temples of his trust
Have vanished with their pride and lust
  Before the breath of God.

Of man's achievement every trace
  Soon mingles with the dust;
This only time cannot efface:
The high communion of the race,
  Their love and toil and trust.

1908

FROM A BIRD'S ANGLE

"Twittering bird, how little you know
  The light that glows at the heart of things;
How much better if it were so
  That you had vision and I had wings;
    If I had more of the thrill of motion,
    And you, the joy of a sun-drenched ocean."

Thus thought I, but the bird, I trow,
Deemed me stupid, and told me so.

1922

THE CONQUEROR'S LAW

The beating ray, the heaving tide,
  Is set to music of the whole,
    And he who takes the conqueror's way
Must move with nature's rhythmic stride—
  The march triumphant of the soul.

1919

THE PHONIC YEARS

The deed is speech. Great Love remembereth
  Only the voice that in the life is found.
The spoken word is but a broken breath
  That moans in breaking into speech and sound;
The thought and feeling,—these are life and death,
  And with the deed, complete life's fullest round.

1923

WONDER-BORN

At times, into my soul a brightness bursts
Whose witchery of allurement I would weave
Upon the canvas of the sky. But when
I push my skill to joy's most subtle range
The colours veil my vision, till a power
More gifted than my own sweeps me with flame,
And robes with hurricane. Then, raimented
With fire, I touch the theme with sunbeam flash,
And soon it stands a thing all wonder-fraught,
A miracle of light, and I perceive
That viewless fingers of Omnipotence
Have made their skill my own.

1923

DREAM-FISHING

Into the silent stream
  Of consciousness I flung
Deep nets of sleep and caught the dream
  That Love is always young.

1916

THE SINGING SKIES

The stars are waiting till our hearts are wise;
  They glow and throb, all vibrant with the thought
That some day we, beholding with clear eyes
The deep celestial splendour of the skies,
  Shall know all beauty out of love was wrought.

1921

THE AUREOLE

THE AUREOLE

I.

When from the bow-string of the night
The arrows of the starlight fall,
The memories of dream-music come
With beauty, almost pain.
Their reminiscent tones and cadences,
Haunted with happiness,
Blend with the restful silences
Like distant bell-chimes in the sunset hour.

I saw the red sun painting skyey symphonies
In banners o'er the hills;
Heard slumber-songs,
You swaying, swinging,
Crooningly, tenderly;
Saw deserts and oases,
Hills of green and forests dim,
Far stretching down the years
While the deep consciousness
Of mother-love was surging, singing in my soul.

How well I still remember
The zig-zag butterflies
I gleefully pursued;
The birds I chased away,
Climbing the tree myself
To make the cherries mine;
The white, and purple trilliums
Gathered in the woods
And proudly brought to you!

Last night I had a token in a dream:
You came and laid my tirèd head
Tenderly on your heart.
I rested peaceful there
Dream-folded in your arms,
Babe-wise upon your bosom
Cradled in rhythmic slumber.
The distant past
Came back again, and lo,
You were my mother,
I your baby boy!

Mother of ages, mother of me,
  Your voice is the soul of rest—
The trumpet winds and the organ sea:
  The billow your heaving breast.

Throned in that cradle of love and dream,
  Your arms so soft and warm,
I laugh in the face of the lightning's gleam,
  I am glad of the sting of the storm.

II.

The lotus of forgetfulness
Itself forgotten, life unfolded new,
And like a glowing sunrise,
Mounted to flaming peaks.

That was our time, great comrade,
Though forgotten ages and lives ago.
Love deepened till a sacred fire
Burned on life's altar stone,
Consuming every shred of selfishness,
Yet love and life were not consumed.

To my soul-luminous vision,
You were clothed with splendour
Of the southern stars. In you,
My heart discovered that fine alchemy
That turns all things to joy.
For you were beautiful!
An emerald of the forest and the meadow.
The blue sky mirrored you;
The very thought of you, my bride,
Ambrosial nurture was;
Lo, a young god was I!

But things of time and sense
Can never image love.
Like sunlight, subtle and electric,
We moved in waves of power,
All-conquering as the sea.
Joy rose on equal wing until
We soared through far abysms of light.

Then energy and beauty
Like suns from some new heaven
Rode stormfully into our hearts
In sacrament of love,
Swung wide the gates of being,
Till body, mind and spirit
Surrendered to the strong creative urge
That gave us fruitage of the sky,
The earth, the sea,
And all the spirit harmonies.

But Love for sake of loving,
Life for sake of life,
Reined in that glad, fierce power,
Lest in our self-abandon,
We should both be swept
Far from our mooring-place
And plunged to the abyss.
So followed we the dear love-angel
Guarding, guiding up that road
That leads to fields of life
With no time-boundaries.
One day—O mighty sorrow!
Measureless the deep!
Great must Love's purpose be!
You lay there pale and pulseless
In the moonlight—dead!
Haloed, your sunny hair,
Love-aureoled, ineffable!
I seemed forsaken in a voiceless world,
But soon your spirit-presence came,
A sweetness robed in gladness.

Yet not alone! I heard no feet
On the oaken floor of the hallway beat,
Yet the spacious rooms of my heart were bright
With the glow of love in eyes of light,
That filled me with strength and joy complete.
I sat alone on the rustic seat
Where the lovers' path and the waters meet;
By outward presence forsaken quite,
Yet not alone.

Ah, never alone! In each dear retreat,
An unforgotten form I greet;
The desert place is a sacred height,
Companionless am I to-night,
Yet not alone.

. . . . .

III.

We lived among the mountains,
And below the peaks
Were jack-pines and the flood.
You were my only daughter,
Reft of mother care
Even from your babyhood;
But since you were
In her fair image formed,
Her dear love-presence
Was restored in you.

To you I was as mother,
Filled your lamp of life

With fragrant oil.
You shone resplendent.
Even now I see you standing,
Joy in eyes, like sunlight on the sea,
Or eve-glow on the hills
At vesper-hour.

I was the craggy mountain,
You the laurel tree
That nestled in its heart.
Defence was I and shelter,
You the pride and treasure of my years.
The sun beat on my bosom warming you,
And when the fury of the blast drove icily,
Loud-shrieking o'er my crags and spars
Like ghosts of crime-stained men,
You, in my coverts standing, sheltered warm,
Smiled as the blue heavens smile.

Often with open arms and radiant eyes,
You came to meet me,
Sunlight gleaming in your hair
That tossed upon my shoulder.
You were all my happiness,
A joy too sweet for words,
Too deep for tears.
You found new heart-ways to my soul,
New highroads for great love.

I was your father and your mother;
Loved you and was loved for both.
We waded in the streamlet,
Wandered in the wild;
We climbed the hills

When evening rouged the west,
And saw the haze to gloaming fade.
We watched the restless night-bird
Circling down the sky
And revelling in the dark.
We played at hide and seek
With every peeping star
That laughed and twinkled,
Just like you,
Daughter of long ago.
I taught you wisdom—heart-lore,
All 'twas well to know
Of what the world knew well;
But chiefly taught you
Wisdom of the heart
That made your living pure and true
And fitted your young soul
For guesting angels.

In promise, you were then
A prophecy of now,
The child of my great hope.
When storms broke me with blight,
You were my restoration;
Again was I the mountain,
Storm-swept still, but crowned
With everlasting light.
The sacred fire of your dawning
Fell in floods upon my heart,
Uplifting me to hope and joy and strength.
Thus through the years,
With love and light
Companion of our ways,

We strolled together in the wild.
Before the sun, high-rising,
Bade the dew-drops hide
Behind their veils of light.
We found the simple flowers,
Woodbine, anemone, arbutus,
Breathing morning fragrance
While the brush of wizard dawn
Painted with beauty
All the eastern skies. .
When nature sang her morning-song
We too went forth with God.

Morn hid the tranquil stars
In caverns of day;
Warmly, the sunny bars
On the alders lay;
Lightly each grassy spathe
Held its sphere of dew
Out of the dust and scathe
To the fleckless blue.
Safe from the curious eye,
From ravage or raid,
'Neath a sapphire sky,
In a wildwood glade,
The flowers blossomed for God,
Unseen, yet fragrant and fair;
Love could not pluck
From their thrones of green
The buds of His care.

IV.

We slept again as dew-drops sleep
When kist into the sun;
As drowsy music melts
Into the chorus of the silences.
What lives we lived meanwhile
Is not my tale.
In Love's large plan
Is nothing else but life.
Enough that each had felt
The urge of immortality,
And stormed the gates of birth
For full expression of his latest dream.

How many years were we apart!
Long yearning years
That called to deed anew,
The world of truth like bending skies
O'erarching all our days.
And each was thrilled
With promise of an hour
When Love should bring together
With a sunrise pageantry
Two eager, waiting hearts
Who knew each other one.

Then came the day! We met!
The joy of starry cycles,
Pent in time's great ocean,
Burst its ancient shores,
And down the sluices of that dawn
Poured floods of chivalry and song.

The light of day,
The vastness of the night,
The wisdom of the ages,
All achievements of the mind,
Were nothing to that blazing splendour.

In tragic undiscernment
All the multitude
Said we were merely friends.
Mere friends! O blind of heart!
The outflung systems of the sky
In travail bowed,
Creation groaned for ages,
Suns emerged from chaos,
Stars were burned,
That your great soul and mine
Should be just friends.

Every noble avenue of earth
Is but a pathway bright with prophecy
And promise of that shining goal.
The harmonies of life,
The songs that shall endure,
And all the Art that thrills
With majesty and mystery
Would pass forever,
Fold themselves in vesture of decay
Were friendship dead.

The joy of motherhood
Is but one stone
In friendship's noble fane.
To be united as a man with woman

Is but to turn the steps,
The eyes, the heart, the life,
Into a vaster union.
The nearest, dearest obligations of the soul,
The circle of all lofty ties
And worthy recognitions
But aureole a mightier Love—
Love that is love,
Unparalleled by urge
Of contract or of sense—
A consciousness that he or she
Is of my blood, that is, myself;
Therefore I love him or love her.
Ay, we were friends;
And with that fact accomplishèd,
The stars laughed in their heavens,
The birds and streams
Rippled the air with liquid music,
And the flowers and forests
Gowned themselves with fragrant loveliness.
The heroes of the world
Were playmates of our past.
Greater than David, Heracles, St. George,
Who trampled dragons underfoot
And lions slew,
We had slain jealousy, intolerance,
And all the monster tyrannies;
Had subjugated circumstance,
Transfigured fate, annihilated destiny.

We learned to love the common good,
To live serene, strive upwards,
In high communion with dream-voices,

Yet were we self-restrained
And reverent of law.
Wide fame we scorned,
Since self-respect is better
Than the far repute
Of undiscerning and misjudging men.
Our higher Self had conquered self;
We loved, were loved,
And life was victory.

'Twas thus, heroic heart, you came,
And with you, as in dream,
The flowers we would not pluck,
But left upon their thrones of loveliness,
Deep in their wildernesses long ago,
To smile on heaven
And blush to crimson
'Neath the kiss of God.

O Friend of Friends, I think of you,
And all the air is fragrant once again
With breath of violets,
And plaintive with the murmur of the sea,
And rich beyond the power of words
Or grasp of thought
With music of your voice.

But, being thus your friend,
Am I the less your son,
Your husband, or your sire
In angel meaning,
Than when, long ago,
Enfolded in your dear, white arms,

I felt the dark grow lighter with your song?
Or when our home was Paradise,
And life was ecstasy
Because you were my queen?
Or when with you
I wandered in the wild,
And clasped you laughing,
In my arms, a lover-child?
I hear your voice—
The angels seem to sing
And breathe wild fragrances around!
Deep in your eyes,
The blue skies sleep,
The mountains rest,
And all the wide seas roll;
But Love Eternal never sleeps.
How could Love sleep,
Thou in His Universe?

. . . . .

V.

Yon dome of watery gray
That crowds us in
Is cleft with sudden flame,
And through the fiery rift
I see the larger day,
The blue beyond the mist,
The free and vast solemnities of sky.

Again the arch is split with fire—
A moment's silence—now,
With hammers of the hurricane,

The storm-king beats the mountains,
Crash on crash!
The thunders roar along the hills
The wind-flails thresh the sea.
The tumult rolls afar and dies
To distant ripples, crackling like musketry;
With engines of the tempest,
Thor is smoothing out
The crumpled parchment of the hills
To level plains.

How, like a mad witch,
The goddess of the storm
Her skirts of rain trails down the night!
Tosses dishevelled hair
Over the shoulders of the world
Till all the gray horizon mirrors
Her dark, impassioned beauty!

The trees take firmer root
To brace themselves
Against the rebel winds
That riot o'er the lands.
Before the flood
The sand foundations glide away
And leave bed-rock
On which faith builds new eras.

War-floods sweep the world;
Men stare across the lands,
Tremble, and think of God.
Tempests rise out of dreams,
New ages dawn, and in the end,
The better dream prevails.

Our lives are one
With the Great Heart
That thunders in the height—
We share the storm with Him.
Our souls are tranquil, therefore,
Though the world be swept with fire.
The blast that breaks
The fortress of the flesh
Shall lift us on its breath
To higher vision, wider vistas,
Holier dreams.

The silken veils
Are torn from Psyche's pinions;
A new life floats
Into the light,
The heart leaps to great hope
And splendid purpose
Dawns from new dreams.

Friend of the steadfast heart,
When day is done
And night falls westward
After all these stern restraints of will,
In that glad hour
When kind, mysterious Death
Rides down the wind
And hurricanes of flame
Unloose our wings
To the free life beyond,
Then crush me to your heart
And I will fold you
As a flower to mine
Before the face of God.

And we shall mount
In chariot of the blast
To heights of ecstasy and power,
The stern, dark beauty of the sky
Unveiled to open view
In one tremendous storm-betrothal
To Love's immortal youth.

And I shall see your face,
Your star-blue eyes
And glinting hair;
Shall hear your voice
As in the former days
In the Canadian wilds.
In that new love-land of our dream,
Where violet-odours
With the wild thrush-music blend
Beside the singing streams,
I'll lay Love's aureole upon your brow
And love you as I love you now.

1916

TEARS

TEARS

THE TORCH

They died for love and beauty,
  Those heroes debonnair;
They died for faith and duty
  To make the earth more fair.

We'll live, that love and beauty
  May evermore abide;
We'll live the faith and duty
  For which our heroes died.

1922

TO THE NURSING SISTERS

You heard the thunder of the guns—every note
  Went crashing through your souls like a crime;
But the rattle in the dying hero's throat,
  You heard alone, nor thought your task sublime,
To stalk death bravely in corridors of doom—
White ministrants of heaven, beating back the gloom.

Not ours to spread the splendour of your name;
  But they who knew your gentle touch on earth
Shall thrill the heavens with brightness of your fame,
  And tell successive ages of your worth.
Your wondrous faithfulness through strain and strife
Was a glimpse of matchless glory that made death seem life.

1921

MOTHER OF NATIONS

Does the Mother of Nations draw the sword
  To rescue her children oppressed?
They have all that the richest lands afford;
They sit content at an ample board
  As safe as a bird in its nest.

Has she laid her spear on the shield of Mars
  New lands in the wars to gain?
Her dominions extend wherever the stars
Are blushing with shame for our foolish wars;
  Her ships are on every main.

And not that the world may acclaim her grand
  Is the roar of her guns on the seas;
Her name is lustred on every strand,
Her glory is known to the farthest land
  Where her standard floats on the breeze.

Ah, this is the pillar of cloud and fire
  That leads her hosts along;
This, *this* is the goal of their deep desire,
The road where their feet shall never tire,—
  To be just, keep faith and be strong.

So the Mother of Nations has risen in might
  At the word of the onward call;
She has shaken her banners forth to the light,
And marched to the front of the people's fight
  Like the van of a tidal wall.

And the future shall say of her sons who died,
  Wherever their feet have trod
With millions of comrades in arms allied:
"They cast the treasures of earth aside
  And marched to the goals of God."

1916

BELGIUM

Belgium, thy name great glory hath;
When might to baseness stooped, thy wrath
Withstood him in the battle path.

The towers that might have been thy trust
They burned and razed and beat to dust—
Still wast thou valiant and august.

We treasure all thy deathless tears;
No quenching through the endless years
Thy silent, solemn grandeur fears.

On every sea, on every strand,
Thy name for faithfulness shall stand,
Belgium, the brave, immortal land!

The everlasting years shall ring,
While sun shall shine or heart shall sing,
With fame of Albert, Belgium's king.

1914

UNGUESSED

Goaded by hate, we sent our boys
  Where iron-helmed battalions trod,
Blaring our boasts with brutal noise
  Into the patient ear of God.

Meaning or purport of the strife
  The fewest had, yet fared abroad;
Seeking the glory that is life,
  They found the wonder that is God.

1923

DAWN

Though thunders deep the hearts of men are shaking
And war-wolves raven, red-eyed, fierce and wild;
Though overseas a storm of blood is breaking
Where once the peace-star smiled;

Brightly the sunrise of Love's dawn is turning
On this dim earth a light before unknown;
A flame of freedom in the soul is burning
And God is on His throne.

The birth of new dominions is impending;
A new world leaps beneath the old world's heart;
And faith beholds blue skies of freedom bending—
Up, people! Do your part.

Lift every voice for world-emancipation;
Give Wisdom, Love and Service fullest power;
Rouse, rouse ye people to the consummation
Of this your dawning hour!

1914

FREEDOM

(*Lusitania Day, 1915*)

A thousand million eager marching feet
Go thundering onward to the unseen shore,
While upward through the human birth-gates beat
A thousand millions more.

Ye who take up the instrument of life,
Think not your heritage of joy was won
Without the waging of eternal strife
Beneath the wistful sun,

Your fathers challenged life with faith so vast
  Achievement stands their monumental creed;
They sought no vindication from the past
  Save in immortal deed.

O sacred Freedom, in life's holy war,
  We pay the cost, however great it be,
Though ruined cities all the earth should scar
  And ships go down at sea.

Then dare the billow and the fourfold blast,
  Let each last reef and pennant be unfurled;
What though great Freedom cost us at the last
  The wrecking of a world?

1915

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Thy peace, O God, our hearts implore!
  No armistice red-shot with gore;
No fist of steel with threatening clad,
But peace that earth has never had,
  With Love sun-gilding every shore.

We spurn all peace that dares ignore
  Thy justice. Down the battle-roar,
The cry rings clear, though stern and sad;
  Thy peace, O God!

We crave no peace that has a score
  Of tyrannies deep at its core;
No wealth and squalor, money-mad,
But peace that makes the whole world glad —
  Thy peace, O God!

1917

THE BUGLE

The Empire needs, in this dark day of slaughter,
  Great-hearted men unawed by doom or dread;
What valour have you shown, what service brought
    her
  To match the tribute of her glorious dead?

You who the loyal standard boldly flaunted
  While peace around you guarded like a wall,
What do you now when Freedom is blood-haunted,
  Do braggart words but make your deeds seem
    small?

When in the future days they tell the story
  Of how the brave, the hero-hearted died,
When Liberty is crowned with fadeless glory,
  Will you be standing honoured at her side

Because you ventured all, nor sought a reason
  Why other men should die and you go free,
Because you held not back in coward treason
  While comrades fought your fight on land and
    sea?

Amid the gallant ranks that did not waver
  Before the blight that shook old Britain's shore,
Will you be one whose prowess helped to save her,
  Who went to war that war should be no more?

The troopship in the harbour rideth ready,
  The tumult thickens. Hear the scornful word.
The foe is mocking! Lift the anchor—steady!
  High tide. The ship's away! Are you aboard?

1916

THE MAILED FIST

When the blood of our deathless heroes
  Has filtered away in the sand,
And the kindly earth to her aching breast
Has folded them all in passionless rest
  And there's weeping in every land,
Shall a wild fool-world, blindly reeling,
  Go blundering on through the mist,
And staggering down the roads of time
O'erwhelming the music of heaven sublime
  With the threat of a mailèd fist?

When mothers, war-widowed, are wailing,
  With a deep despair in their tears,
Shall we see the thing we have fondly nursed,
Ambition, the dragon-monster accursed,
  Still shaking his brand down the years?
Let war-drums be silenced forever,
  The bannered millions dismissed,
Let all the lands of the earth unite
To drive from the world with invincible light
  The threat of the mailèd fist!

916

MAKING WAR

The root of strife is not that final force
  That bends the bow to breaking;
Give but one unkind thought free course
  And war is in the making.

1915

AFTER

After the storm—a calm
That startles the blue to surprise,
And lustres the path
Where earth lies
All spent with the hurricane's wrath.

After the day of toil—
The hush of the cool summer eve,
The purple-dyed west,
And the weave
Of beautiful things sun-caressed.

After the dark, the morn
Dims softly each radiant star,
Till the blush of its ray
Hides afar
In the heart of the conquering day.

After the fight is o'er,
And the tumult of conflict is past,
From a whirlwind of dust
Shall a vast
Morn break to an infinite trust.

And the war shall be nothing at last
  But a glistening tear, love-impearled,
By sorrow and sacrifice left
  On the sunlit face of the world.

1915

THE DREAM OF GOD

THE DREAM OF GOD

THE Bahai Movement had its rise in Persia in the year 1844. To-day it has become known throughout the world. This unique essay towards social and spiritual reconstruction was at first centred in a brilliant youth known as The Bab, who foretold the coming of a great world-messenger. Many have described the wonderful charm of this pure-hearted hero of progressive religion, who was martyred in 1850 after six years of teaching.

Baha 'Ullah, a man of wealth and prominence in Persia, began to teach the cause in 1852, and soon announced himself privately as the one whom the Bab had heralded. He told his countrymen that an age of brotherhood and peace was about to begin, an age of illumination for humanity such as the world had never known. This was to come after the old methods were discredited and the race saw the futility of war and hate and oppression.

Thousands of his followers and those of the Bab were put to death. He himself was exiled to various places and finally imprisoned in Acca (or Akka) on the western coast of Palestine. This was in 1868. From this prison the message of love and unity spread through western Asia.

After forty years of exile and imprisonment, Baha U'llah passed, leaving his son Abdul Baha as the interpreter of his teachings and the centre of the Cause. Under his guidance, the message of unity and peace has been carried to all lands, and is uniting Christians and Mohammedans, Buddhists and Parsis, Hebrews and Hindus, in a universal spiritual brotherhood.

Since the passing of Abdul Baha in 1921, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, the grandson of Abdul Baha, has been accepted as the Guardian of the Cause. Shoghi is a recent Oxford student, and a personality of wonderful sweetness and radiance.

The Bahai Movement is an effort to make religion the expression of a living spirit without permanent veils and forms. It is a life so vital as to create its own modes of procedure, and to create them spontaneously.

About seventy years ago Baha U'llah declared that the new age would find its chief expression in working out twelve basic principles which he enunciated as follows: 1. The oneness of humanity. 2. The independent investigation of truth. 3. The foundation of all religions is one. 4. Religion must be the cause of unity. 5. Religion must be in accord with science and reason. 6. Equality between men and women. 7. Prejudice of all kinds must be forgottten. 8. Universal peace. 9. Universal education. 10. The solution of the economic problem. 11. An international auxiliary language. 12. An international tribunal.

Such is the Bahai Movement in the interests of brotherhood, unity and peace, as revealed by the Bahais themselves. Baha U'llah's writings were copious, but few of them have been printed in English, and those translations which have been made leave much to be desired.

To be a Bahai involves no rite or ordinance, no external sign or outward symbol; but simply to make one's life a love-messenger to every other soul, to be what one seems in sincere word, clear thought, and evanescent self, and to love and honour all those who live true, wholesome and beautiful lives.

THE DREAM OF GOD

PART I.—THE DOOR

(El Bab)

Again the mystic East, from her dark tent
  Unloosed the fastening and pushed back the fold,
  And peering from her eyes with wisdom old,
Beheld a rainbow arch of promise bent,
And lo! beneath that irised Orient,
  A luminous door through whose wide portal rolled
  A flood, joy-palpitant, of liquid gold—
A tide that reached to every continent.

In massive chord, the heavens sang aloud:
 "Lift up your heads, the King of Glory waits!"
In reverence the ancient hills were bowed—
 "Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!
 "Let all the sons of God, with feet unshod,
 "March on into the splendid dream of God."

"In the beginning, God!" What loftier thought
  Was ever sounded from the bells of time?
What meaning into words was ever wrought
  More sweet and solemn, sacred and sublime?

Was it some zealot, from his soma bowl
  Pouring libations on the Ganges sod,
Invoking Indra to enrich his soul,
  Who gave to us the first faint gleam of God?

Or was it at an ancient Theban shrine
  Some poet in imagination caught
A dim conception of the Love divine
  And gave the ages the stupendous thought?

Perchance some pilgrim by Euphrates' shore
  Discerned within, a strange inspiring force,
And knew himself to be the virtual door
  Through which his soul might find its highest
    Source.

The words were written in the long ago
  By one who near some eastern river trod;
Though we their fountain head may never know,
  We cherish them: "In the beginning, God!"

With glad surprise, the traveller looking down
Upon Shiraz, that ancient Persian town,
  Cries: "God is great in beauty as in power;
The senses in this sea of splendour drown!"

From that far land the Zend Avesta came
When Zarathustra spoke the glorious name;
  Now through another door, a gleam of Light
Burst forth in fires of sin-consuming flame.

O'er all the world, from that Iranian shore,
The fragrances of heaven were breathed once more;
  The lands were lighted by the golden lamp
Of truth bright-shining through its living door.

The herald, he, of that intenser ray
By which the earth was flooded with the day;
  The bearer of a clear, far-gleaming light,
Revealer of the love-illumined way.

'Twas as in other days when Moses first
Received the Law, the tide-gates strained and burst;
  Then fell the radiance of the gentle Light
Of peace on tribes by bigotry long cursed.

He told them of the dawning that should be,
The end of prejudice, the victory
  That lives all old oppressions bravely down
With timeless healing of eternity.

"Ye weary souls, rest where the shadows are;
On roads of wrong your feet have wandered far;
  Your hearts are burdened by the wildering throng
Of faiths in wild conflicting words at war.

"Your sins with all humility confest,
Cast ye the load of sorrow from your breast,
  And look within, for I will meet you there
In quiet dream-pavilions of my rest.

"Bow not beneath the pharasaic rite,
Nor let the formalist your freedom blight.
  Within your hearts find rest in lowliness—
Make heavy burdens with contentment light.

"Lay creeds aside; from ceremonial cease;
In humble service give your powers release,
  To love is to obey the highest law
And open roads to everlasting peace.

"God is the Truth, the Universal Sun,
The great, the glorious and the changeless One
From whom the streams of justice, love, and right
Through all the spirits of the races run.

"He is the Everlasting and the Real;
He holds the stars that in their orbits wheel;
The Fount of wisdom and the Source of life;
The power to love and do, to think and feel."

Thus spake El Bab: "There cometh one in might
And splendour of the Universal Light,
Shall show the beauty of a brighter day
To every soul that has the inner sight."

Then, in the spirit of a juster age,
The Light of God shot through earth's battle rage
Like some rare meteor flaming through the dark,—
A fiery cross on history's latest page.

The hurt and blight of hate, the gnawing tooth
Of blind intolerance and blows uncouth,
Were branded on that rood, till mankind knew
The life of love is heaven, and love is truth.

With frowning front, yet jealous and afraid,
Their craft in danger, him the priests betrayed—
Those bulwarks of a chronic self-regard
The cause to ravage and destroy essayed.

In filthy dungeons left in rags to lie;
In loneliness of exile forced to fly;
In old Tabriz, 'twixt heaven and earth he passed —
To such as he, 'tis fuller life to die.

With that great light went out ten thousand stars;
The wounded earth was quivering with their scars;
  So narrow bigotry was crowned as king,
And sat upon the crimson throne of Mars.

But love divine was never vanquished quite,
Even on the earth, the ever-present might
  Of God, Jehovah, Allah, Brahm, or Christ,
Is Love, the urge of universal Light.

And our humanity is also one—
A sea whose billows rise and roll and run
  Into the channels of the restive lands,
Until its mists are folded in the Sun.

When some wild conflagration sweeps the earth
And with relentless fury curbs our mirth;
  We stand and stare into the silent blue
And feel that all is vanity and dearth.

Then strange new light comes flaming up the sea—
A sense of being strong and greatly free;
  And through the clear apocalyptic air,
We hear new songs of ages yet to be.

And like the gray sails of a thousand ships
That rise like phantoms from the ocean's lips,
  Or snow-white fleeces in an azure sky,
That young Eolus drives with shepherd whips,

A heavenly presence o'er the silence broods;
And sweeps away our soul-depressing moods;
  Then all reality to sight appears,
And earth the sense of earth and time eludes.

Through that deep hush, a clear melodious strain
Runs like a wild-bird's song when, after rain,
  From field and forest, Nature calls the soul
To play with June in some green, flowered lane.

The song is in ourselves. Its tones we find
Like a sweet carol floating on the wind—
  A murmurous vibrancy of love and truth,
The music of the Universal Mind.

A shout breaks o'er the mountains
  And up the sun's bright way;
The dream of God is rising
  To fullness in our day.

Behold His herald cometh;
  Let not our voices cease
To tell the gentle story
  Of universal peace.

THE DREAM OF GOD

PART II.—THE LIGHT

(Baha U'llah)

Mirror of God! From Carmel's sacred height
  Thou hast revealed the day proclaimed of yore,
  The new Love-dawn. Thou art the open door
Of radiant faith, humility and light.
Here where the billows in their restless might
  Are halted by the adamantine shore
  To music of the ocean's organ roar,
Thou turnest back the frenzy of the night.

Like fir-wood fragrance of a southern strand,
  Or sun-gleams broken on a dark cloud-form
That bends a rainbow o'er a sultry land,
  Thy word of peace was scattered to the storm-
    A note that fluttered from a prison cage
    Is now become the love-song of the age.

Of all the souls that e'er the Persian skies
Smiled down upon, none was more good and wise
  Than Abbas,[1] till Baha U'llah, his son,
Looked on the world with heaven-illumined eyes.

[1]Baha U'llah named his son Abbas Effendi (Abdul Baha) after his grandfather, Abbas, a Persian nobleman.

This was the Light of the Eternal One,
The Persian Lion turning to the Sun;
A word outringing from the towers of peace:
"War's cruel course is almost fully run."

His sacred rites were prayer and kindly deed,
And faith in Love was his sufficient creed;
He found a valid altar everywhere
Whereon to offer self for human need.

He deemed the cross, the crescent and the fire,
The priest, the censer and the clear-voiced choir,
The songs and sacraments, the incense sweet,
Sacred to those alone whom they inspire.

Religion had not yet been fairly tried
Though many prophets in its name had died.
His wistful eyes saw Love with broken heart,
In word accepted, but in deed denied.

He knew no system could be true at heart
That keeps the race in prejudice apart.
All that would sunder human souls is sin
Though we should name it law, religion, art.

The priests were jealous of a lamp so bright.
Its word was truth; its wisdom was the light.
Expatriate long in many distant lands,
He came to Akka's[1] walls by Carmel's height.

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[1]Akka, variously named at different periods, Achor, Ptolemais, Acre, Acca, Akka, is the scene of a Turkish penal prison, which stands on the Palestinian shore of the Mediterranean at the foot of Mount Carmel

In two bare rooms, with seventy more, he spent
His prison exile, but his thoughts were bent
To such accomplishment that few could guess
How much his wondrous life and teachings meant.

Report of him and his deep wisdom passed
Throughout the Orient, voluble and vast.
Folk from afar to see the prophet came,
To hear his word and heed while life should last.

Arrived in Akka, all their toils seemed vain;
The guard forbade, but ere they turned again,
The prophet from his window, arms upraised,
Perceived, and blessed them, weeping on the plain.

They fared away to far Mazandaran,
To valleys where the flood of Indus ran;
Or northward toiling in their pilgrimage,
To live a nobler, truer life, began.

Meanwhile the stern, deliberate years rolled by
With leisure for a contemplation high
And writings of such memorable power
As shall outlive the mountains and the sky.

And all the while the great, blue, restless sea
Ploughed on as if a vast eternity
Were breaking at his feet to feed his heart
With wisdom written here, in part, for thee:—

This is the Word of the Eternal Mind,
The Breath of God, the cleansing Spirit Wind
That winnows life, and blows the chaff away,
Leaving the ripened fruit of joy behind.

In thee I placed the essence of My Light;
Use it for service; Love will give thee might.
For perfect action and for wise command,
The lamp of truth will guide thee day and night.

Lo, I created thee both rich and strong;
I made thee noble, yet behold! ere long,
Thou wast degraded, ignorant and poor;
Return, O loved one, from the roads of wrong!

From Love I moulded thee as from the clay;
Look thou within; turn not thine eyes away,
And thou shalt find me standing in thy heart,
A glorious sun, the centre of thy day.

I built within thy soul those fortress gates
Wherein Love dwells, and fadeless Beauty waits.
There thou shalt ever find thy highest joys—
Thy better self—the life that Love creates.

My face of light and beauty for thy guide,
If thou behold, and in its glowing hide,
Shall be as sunshine of a fragrant June
To cheer thee, sailing on the darkest tide.

Son of the Throne: Love's hearing too is thine;
Esteem and honour it, for it is Mine;
My sight thy seeing, Mine thy holiness;
The Vine am I; drink thou the perfect wine.

My servant, thou art like a jewelled sword;
If thou would'st be the mighty Spirit's word,
From sheath of self withdraw the hidden blade,
Thou shalt reveal the splendour of the Lord.

Live love and truth and in the furnace cast
Thy baser thought to feed the torrid blast;
  The golden flux poured from the melting-pot
Shall shape to beauty and forever last.

Free from the fetters of thine own desire,
To love and unity thou shalt aspire;
  The gates of peace shall open to thy sight
And all thy being glow with heavenly fire.

Then, O belovèd, thou shalt be my son,
And on the roads of fuller life shall run;
  The veils all rend, and o'er a world eclipsed,
A mighty splendour breaks, and dawn's begun!

Then all the roads are free, and free thy part
To speak in truth the higher words of art;
  The cloud-veils broken now, the rift will show
The goodness of the Universal Heart.

The gift is thine, henceforth, in thine own right,
To sift each ray of truth for heavenly light,
  And no cathedral shall usurp the claim,
Or dare to say thy dawning is the night.

When earth can trust the good-will of her guest,
His soul shall climb, in wisdom's wonder-quest,
  To peaks of knowledge in the high pursuit
Of leisured vision and harmonious rest.

For deep in Nature's Heart is purest gold;
'Tis his who finds it, his the right to hold;
  The violent shall take it is the law;
The truth you do is bought, but never sold.

We were not ready for the flaming pace;
Our eyes were holden therefore by God's grace;
  Lest we too soon should grasp the living fire,
We could not see what stared us in the face.

But when the hour arrived, the blazing beam
Burst through the wakened mind, a golden gleam,
  And now the time when we perceived it not
Seems like a ghost of a forgotten dream.

Our stupid, small antipathies grow numb
When to the soul its solemn crises come;
  Then back to primal sense our instincts fly,
And all our boasts of blood and race are dumb.

Even little patriots are saviours when
Their faith in God breeds loyalty to men;
  This land or that is sacred if it serve
The commonwealth of Love, and only then.

Who loves his native land is wise;
More glorious he whose visioned eyes
  Behold our God in every face
Beneath the blue and bending skies.[1]

One God is ours, one earth, one air,
One sea, one sky is everywhere.
  The world is not so very wide,
And heaven has only one bright stair.

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[1]See "A Traveller's Narrative," by Prof. E. G. Browne, of Cambridge University. Prof. Browne was the only European known to have met Baha U'llah. While in Persia for the purpose of studying Persian literature, he came across the Babists and the Bahais and lingered long enough among them to study their religion and to write their remarkable history.

It rises sheer in every clime
Veiled only by the films of time.
  Love's stairway to the throne of God
Is pushing through the lily's slime.

THE DREAM OF GOD

PART III—THE SERVANT

(*Abdul Baha*)

This little city by the wistful sea
  For many years had been his prison home.
Often he watched these crags the breakers comb
And knew the billows of the world to be
One undivided blue immensity.
  He saw the nations, like the ocean's foam—
  Britannia, Gaul, America and Rome—
In dignity of compromise agree.

Now man to man and race to race renew
  Your solemn pledge to slay the Titan, War.
  This is the age of light. The morning star
Gleams in the orient sky; serene its hue;
  And life no more is rule of beak and claw
  Where lowliness and love are final law.

The Tigris thunders from its height of snows
Through wild crag-canyons till at last it flows,
  In lazy leisure curving, where Baghdad
Is oriented in unique repose.

Thither at first exiled, Baha 'Ullah
Took Abbas, his first son, Abdul Baha.
  Nine tender years! Yet banished from his home,
No more to see the city of the Shah.

Two heavens were in the youth's unfoldment caught:
The heavens above, the heavens in his thought.
  Hence, only where God led, his blinded foes
From land to land their patient prisoner brought.

Most great is Allah! Evermore most great
His purpose which unwitting lips call "fate."
  The Beauty of Eternity is One—
How infinite His glory and His state!

What want and sorrow, what a blight of fears,
How many woes, how many burning tears
  Were banished by the Master's gentle hand
And loving word in all those lonely years!

Abdul Baha, the Servant of the Light;
A Mirror of Eternity, a bright
  Enduring joy made manifest to men,
A heavenly beacon pushing back the night.

Such is his name. How much his soul must see
Who crams the days with heaven and harmony;
  The prophet voice alone may speak for God,
And clear the roads for all humanity.

From him, our Friend and Master, shone those rays
That morning nurtured in its twilight haze
  And flung across the world; but now they rise
To brightest noon, to sudden zenith blaze.

They came from many lands, both rich and poor,
To share the joy within a prison door!
  And once a guest was curious to know
Why every face the light of gladness wore.

"Dear Master, if my will with yours accord,
Tell me why those who gather at your board—
  Your guests of every race and creed and clime—
Go forth in all the radiance of the Lord!"

"All I can tell," said he, "is that I trace
In every countenance a living grace,
  And nothing else in any do I see
But the loved image of the Father's face."

I mused upon his words. If I could trace
In every soul, the perfect Father's face,
  I, too, would search in every heart for God,
And find Him in the humblest of our race,

And finding Him, the heavens with joy would ring,
The earth grow greener, birds more sweetly sing;
  The buds would burst to blossom at my door
And add their fragrance to the love I'd bring.

If e'er the Lord, the Christ, unknown,
  Despised and lowly, sad and poor,
Should come, work-weary and alone,
  And turn him to my cottage door;

His travel-worn and dusty feet
  My hand would lave with loving care,
For 'tis the Christ alone I'd meet
  In every soul that lingers there.

No gold I'd bring, for I have none,
But faith would give my soul release,
And joy and Love would make me one
With Him in gentleness and peace.

The Messenger of God I'd meet
In cloistered fellowship apart;
The Christ of ages I should greet
Here in the hostel of my heart.

Arrows of light leapt from his quivering bow
Sprung by the hand of Love, and in the foe,
All blinding pride, all bigotry and hate
Died like the darkness in the morning glow:—

Beware of prejudice, for one least whit
Of bias clips the wing and pinions it.
The web of life is woven to a plan,
And all of us into the pattern fit.

The shrill muezzin calls the tribes to prayer;
The faithful kneel, and on the desert air
A fragrant chalice, incense-breathing, floats,
For over Islam is great Allah's care.

The God of Israel bends a listening ear
To every Hebrew with a heart sincere;
And by the solemn, silent peace that falls
Upon his soul, he knows Jehovah near.

The Christian gives his God another name;
The Parsi yet another, but the flame
That kindles love in every soul on earth
Is in its substance and effect the same.

When soul to soul sends out its beckoning smile,
The blue skies closer bend, and then awhile,
  It matters little where our lot be cast,
Whether beside the Jordan or the Nile.

The great religions are in essence one,
As all the colours issue from the sun;
  Combine the beauty of them all and see—
Is any missing in the diamond?—None!

Love hath no preference for church or creed,
Observes no ordinance, but kindly deed;
  His sacraments are gifts with others shared—
A cup of water for another's need.

If ought of bigotry in thee be found,
Let the blue beauty of the skies around
  Show thee how pitiful thy scorn and hate
Till they in seas of harmony are drowned.

In east or west the star may camp
  If but some gleaming it discloses;
The light is clear, then good the lamp;
  The garden is as fragrant as its roses.

For he who brings the soul in need
  The ministry of love and healing
Commends to us his utmost creed
  With more than sanctity appealing.

Of all the virtues by the Master taught,
None is more rare, nor more with blessing fraught
  Than that of blindness to another's sin—
The praise and beauty of the generous thought.

There is a meanness that would feed the throng
Of prurient gossips with a baneful tongue;
  Would sow the earth with dragon-teeth of hate,
For harvest, reaping insolence and wrong.

Judge not another, but with truth defend;
Help love to win; there let your action end.
  Have you opinions? They have little worth,
And none unless with all that's known they blend.

The vice that we in other souls bemoan
Is oft the one to which we most are prone;
  The virtue we are finding everywhere
Is surely a reflection of our own.

  Forget the evil in the souls of men;
  Hath thy good friend one fault and virtues ten?
    Let not thy spirit for that one vice fret,
    But cast it into Lethe and forget.

  In some dire enemy, perchance, but one
  Bright star of virtue with ten vices run,
    Blaze thou that virtue on the open sky,
    And let his failings in oblivion die.

Divine forgetting makes the soul outstand
Like pillared fire above the desert land,
  While all the evil we ignore is blown
Into the wilderness as drifting sand.

No sunshine lustres to a richer glow
Than evanescent self. To serve, and know
  God sees and values all we do or dare
For selfless Love. Why do we struggle so

To flaunt our triumph in the sight of those
Who will forget us ere the sunlight goes
  Time keeps no grateful record of the past,
But Love observes and every secret knows.

Each deed of love shall silhouette the dawn
And ride into the arch of heaven anon;
  Blaze out upon the blue ethereal dome
When war's acclaim is into silence gone.

Then wherefore hasten? Does your pride outburst
To tell the world in other cares immersed
  The tale of your exploit? Is there not one
Somewhere on earth might better tell it first?

Or be there none to tell it, even then,
The eager silence knows; and braver men
  Have died in noble sorrow on the cross—
God marks each sparrow's falling, where and when.

The candle burns its heart in bright desire
And melts its soul to light in tears and fire;
  It whispers to the dark of golden dawn,
Then dies upon a self-consuming pyre.

Service of love, from all self-seeking free,
Compassion, reverence, justice, harmony—
  These are the final sum of God's demands;
Confirmed in these, thy life shall perfect be.

The Merciful was in this Mirror shown;
In this great Soul, the Self of God was known.
  He pioneered, for burdened hearts, the way
To live the life as children of the throne.

Bring thou no loss to any soul, no grief,
But to the weary rest, to pain relief.
Speak thou no word unkindly of another,
But treat thine enemy as thine own brother.

Reveal his virtues, hide his faults alway,
And ever for his highest welfare pray.
If dire calamity thy pathway cross,
Rejoice, for God doth bless thee in thy loss.

Cheer thou thy neighbour in the hour of sadness;
Beguile his gloom with gentle rays of gladness,
A heavenly table for his scanty dole,
And pleasant water for his thirsty soul.

Thy word be truth, thy life a star revealing
A presence radiating rest and healing.
A lamp be thou to light each pathway trod,
A herald of the joy and peace of God.

To work is worship. Do thy humble part
Well as thou canst; this is the highest art.
To serve is prayer, to labour is divine
If with the toil God's love is in the heart.

Contentment is for him who sows and reaps,
Whose frugal taste its wise possessor keeps
In health and wealth and honest, cleanly ways;
His mind at rest—how peacefully he sleeps!

With milk and dates, the Arab is serene,
A tent his home, the desert his demesne.
More kingly than the food that others buy,
However rich, a crust with hunger keen.

His radiant acquiescence was a crown;
No demon of resentment bowed him down.
He moved so like a god that all he met
Revered the prisoner of that Turkish town.

He loved all men; accepted all the cost
Of character; nor rued a whole world lost.
He held his course along the heights of day,
Reflecting heaven upon the tempest-tost.

He loved his guards and governors, and they
Discerned in him the power their minds to sway;
A godlike soul oppressed by many wrongs,
Yet knew they not wherein his triumph lay.

"How good it is," said he, "to come and go
In freedom!" Yet he never said: "You know
I am not free." His strong unfettered soul
Soared on Love's wing where'er the breezes blow.

No hope on earth was e'er more strangely sweet
To many than the longing just to meet
The Master, but he passed. Time has a way
Our will to thwart, our purpose to defeat.

O Loveliness of Light! Have we not prayed
To meet thee, see thee ere thy form should fade?
To look into thy wonder-speaking eyes,
And feel thy gentle hand upon us laid?

At times our souls thy presence would have sought;
Sometimes we felt that nothing could have bought
The sense of thine immeasurable peace,
So spheral, vast and sweet; sometimes we thought:

If I might hear the Master's voice
  Beside the tideless sea,
My soul would evermore rejoice
  In Love's eternity.

If I might look upon his face,
  I think my heart would be
Thrilled with the splendour and the grace
  Of all reality.

The mighty secret I should know
  Of healing and release
If I might hear him whisper low:
  "Beloved, go in peace."

But men have met God's presence in the earth
And turned again unto their native dearth;
  Seen but a soul they could not comprehend,
And some have been offended by his mirth.

Unless we find some beauty in the soul,
No hope have we to reach a spirit goal;
  Without a green oasis in the heart,
All is mirage where wastes of desert roll.

Only the hidden things eternal are,
True grandeur of the soul no veil can bar
  From heaven's clear view. The Light within the light
Is all we truly see in man or star.

"Blessed are they who, though they have not seen
Have yet believed." Did Jesus haply mean
  Such little ones as we, that missed the way
To him so long, and yet would on him lean?

Beware the lure of persons. These are nought
But vapoury evanescence that has caught
  The sunbeam shining through an earthly cloud;
It is the sun that all the glory wrought.

We worship him; his word we disobey;
"Lord, Lord! Have we not prophesied," we say,
  "In thy great name?" O Love, forgive us Thou
In this Thy day of Light—the Judgment day!

The loveliness of God within thee shined;
The sun-gleam of the Universal Mind,
  The Mirror, Messenger, Revealer, thou,
Of Beauty that can never be defined.

Thou hast made manifest the perfect light;
Hast brought such beauty to our inner sight
  That from the splendour we in thee behold,
We half can guess His glory and His might.

Were we not jealous for the state of those
Who came before thee with their Light, who knows,
  We, too, might worship thee as we did them,
And leave thee also open to thy foes?

THE DREAM OF GOD

PART IV—AT REST

The moon is waning and will soon be set.
With folded tents, the starry caravan
Melts into light. Above each lowly khan,
The palms stand out in lordly silhouette
Against the brighter dawn: but even yet,
Some souls are sleeping; since the world began
With music of the morning stars hath man
Been eating lotus-leaves and doth forget.

A bird trills out his carol to the skies,
A song of life, for this is what he saith:
I sing once more the phenix-dirge, of death
Love-conquered. It is death alone that dies.
Now over plain and city, sea and sod,
The new-earth bells chime out the dream of God.

Four leagues from Nazareth. Hush! here he lies,
Carmel his cenotaph, his home the skies.
Who, in his name would dare to speak of death?
Abdul Baha, the blessèd, never dies.

His spirit rests not where his feet once trod;
But every heart shall feel the touch of God.
His arms of love are folded round the world,
But most where lowly, loving toilers plod.

When we on others gifts of joy bestow,
From life to life his light of love shall glow:
  His bounties rain upon us from the skies,
His fragrances through all our spirits flow.

Let prejudice and all divisive thought
Ebb to mortality, till life be caught
  In reefs of Love's imperishable flame;
Then shall God's temple rise, in beauty wrought.

So long, a prisoner on that sacred shore,
The fetters of humanity he wore,
  That kind release came like a breath of spring,
Him to his ancient freedom to restore.

Great peace now folds him in her snowy wings,
And hope her bright celestial raiment brings;
  While o'er the splendour of his highest joys,
Pure Love the rose-hues of her vesture flings.

Behold the land! There shall be no more sea!
Now war shall end, another age shall be
  Where justice, love and higher faith shall give
New laws, new life, and new humanity.

No more we see him. Soft the breezes blow;
The seas upon their beaches whisper low;
  The birds in yonder sycamores are dumb;
The lambs upon the hillsides seem to know.

The petals from my Persian rose have gone;
They fell before the spirit winds of dawn,
  And now their fragrances are everywhere,
And nevermore from earth shall be withdrawn.

"Now I shall be with you alway," he said,
And then was seen no more. He is not dead;
The presence of the Beauty of our God
Is often ours unseen. 'Tis felt instead.

Hereto, whene'er we mused on him, we hied
In thought to Akka, o'er the billows wide;
Henceforth, we'll think of him not far away;
He speaks to us, close-standing at our side.

Think you he will not speak? Be not afraid;
Be not by timid doubt or fear betrayed.
Ask him the question in your heart to-night;
Should he not answer, then you have not prayed.

Farewell to Haifa! Yonder crescent moon
Tells of a land where it is always June.
Our white-sailed ships, far-speeding, bear away
Into a life where is no afternoon.

We have not lost our gifted prophet sage;
He has become the spirit of the age;
A sea of Love is he, of power and thought
O'er which we reach our promised heritage.

It is not well that we should grieve or weep.
The restless billows swell and heave and heap,
Then rise in vapour to the sun to fall
In tears of rain where parchèd meadows sleep.

Now all our fetters—anchors to the past,
With forward urging, far away we cast;
We burn our ships and climb along the stars,
Into the dawning future calm and vast.

1921

THE IMMORTALS

THE IMMORTALS

LL men are essentially noble. Constitutionally, there are no common people. The ideal, not the achievement, is the measure of the soul. We are what we will, not what we seem to be. That we fail of achievement blinds us to our greatness. Our bodies are star-stuff; our spirits, flames of the infinite Light. The Universe and every being in it groans for expression in loftier planes of consciousness. Every true man in his best moments is a poet, an artist, a genius. When his vision is vivid, every man knows himself great, recognizes his own nobility, feels himself indisputably an Olympian. To him who walks erect, even the stars bow down.

No man stumbles to the mountain peak. Genius is not the result of chance. Achievement is won only at the sword's point. The brave soul still pushes up the steep and wins to the light—or fails—worthily, in either case, for effort, not achievement, matters. Alas! the mastery of circumstance and not the conquest of self wins our admiration. Achievement is but the bait with which the Universe lures the soul to the expression of its own greatness, brings it to recognize itself as noble, and urges it to play well its part in the drama of the gods.

First-magnitude souls do not commonly express themselves in verse. They are not great talkers; they are great forces. They move with long-premeditated, but decisive purpose. The strong

emotions of the spirit flame out to large effect, impelled by deep conviction; nor can it be otherwise. Yet the greatest are at times irresistibly eloquent in relation to their own work. They are unquestionably poetic when stirred by a cause that sets their tongues aflame.

As the poems in this collection are historic in theme, the views expressed in them are necessarily those of the immortal characters concerned. If the utterances ascribed to the ancients appear, in some cases, to be too modern for the warrant of historic perspective, the explanation is that the author believes we commonly underestimate the vision of these great souls. We must suppose they uttered many truths which their contemporaries failed, through incapacity, to receive and report.

Ruggedness rather than fine artistry has been the aim in these monologues. Big souls defy everything but the fire in their own volcanic hearts. Robustness is ever ascendant; ultra-refinement is always decadent. Any attempt to make the great undying speak in their own words and ways to these times would be an assured futility, even had one the astonishing conceit to think oneself equal to the task. It seemed best, therefore, to use present-day language, except where the use of older words might lend a peculiar verisimilitude to the character, as in the case of Moses or Alfred or Elizabeth.

These are not the only deathless names of history, nor are they, in all cases, the greatest. They find place here because they first appealed to the heart of the author.

THE IMMORTALS

ABRAHAM

My father fashioned idols—'twas his craft—
And had ordained that I should learn his art;
So being his apprentice in some sort,
I, though I shame to say it, made gods too.
But finding images our hands had shaped
Lost, or discarded by their worshippers,
And thrown into the sludge of some foul ditch
Whose irrigant waters, trickling o'er the land,
Made their own little share of Accad thrive,
My speech unrobed my thought, direct and keen:
"Who made the maker of these gods?" I asked.
Then paused he in his tasks, impressively
To deprecate my quest, gave such retort
As prejudice of years doth sometimes give
To shafts of youth, whose clear-eyed innocence
Is oft esteemed a child's impertinence.

Yet do I think misgivings sometimes rose
When timidly he probed his hungry heart.
Be that at rest; he left the land of Ur,
Renounced,—no, that may be too strong a word,

How should I know?—ceased from his handicraft,
Making no more resourceless gods for men,
And died in Aram 'mid the hills of Heth.

Then came that voice as soundless as the light:
"Go, get thee southward, leave thy kindred here,
Take tents and camels, raiment, food and wine,
And I will bring thee to a pleasant land,
And make thy race like sand for multitude."

I saw no phantom shape, no sound I heard,
But life unveiled itself in vivid thought,
Distinct, imperative, and luminous.
I knew that Bel Merodach was no God,
That all the eidolons of Ur were nought,
For now mine eyes had seen Eternity,
The source, the truth, the final urge of all;
The soul of things, the light ineffable
That all the wide star-spaces floods with life;
This, *this* was God, and there was none beside.

So here I wait beneath the terebinths,
And see my sons innumerable rise,
All pledged and covenanted to one God,
To that all-searching, all-revealing Word,
Unseen, immutable, eternal, true,
To whose high purpose all the years shall bend.

If there be others in the latter days
Shall give to God some dear, familiar name,
To show Him holy or inscrutable,
To prove Him wise, almighty or most just,
Yet would I have those who shall hold my faith,
Who therefore are my sons, remember this,
The name that Abram chose for God was "Friend."

1911

ALFRED

Thou hast most timely come
To England, Asser, for thy diligence
Shall bring the grace of letters to this land.
Thy learning shall the better find its course
When I have told thee of the dangerous floods
Through which we passed to the security
Of that rude peace which gives me leisure now
To use thy lore. When late our fathers fared
Along the highroads of these inland seas
To win their doomèd weird of long renown,
Their lust of power kept Britain's lands abroil.
So dured the stress and storm, the surge and seethe,
Till Egbert, the Bretwalda, shaped the dream
That we name England. Then was peace. . . . .

But when those foam-necked cleavers of the wave,
The galleys of the Danes, came down the seas,
And 'gainst the overlords of Æthelred
Prevailing, smote the land, Wessex alone
Of these dominions bent not to the foe,
But fixed herself in island Athelney,
Impregnable. I ruled the Saxons there
With rugged kingcraft, choosing fittest men
For captaincy, and for wise governance,
The rightest laws.

I need not tell thee how
The Wessex arms withstood the battle's brunt:
Their bravery, let Æthandune attest.
I taught my sturdy yeomanry to fight,
And falling, how to rise and fight again;
To win by making failure victory.

And not by land alone we fought the foe,
But built us ships to meet him on the main;
And so at last we won by land and sea
And made our stronger arms invincible.

But when the Northman yielded to our power,
I made him over all the Danelagh, lord,
Well knowing that to mix the Norseman's blood
With ours would make a better, sturdier race.
And once it chanced that in the tide of war
The wife and sons of him who led the Danes
Were in my hands as captives of our arms.
My clemency restored them to his heart
And sought no ransom, knowing well indeed
That gentleness is mightier than might—
A word my mother taught me when a child.

Now all was peace and yet my heart was sad;
The Danish wars had made the Saxons strong
Against their foes, but rude and ignorant
And almost savage in the gentler light
Of those humaner arts of life and peace
That constitute the glory of a race.
Long, long ago, with Æthelwulf my sire,
I sought the home of classic harmonies
And saw the ghosts and glories of old Rome,
Despite time's scathe and havoc, noble still.
My heart was thrilled with dreams of Italy;
I felt the gulf 'twixt her and mine own land.
How far was Roman art beyond the hope
Of Britain! Not a thousand years could weave
Such mysteries of beauty into life;
Yet would I make the humblest British heart
A living spring of justice, strength and joy,
And teach the highest art—greatly to live.
Our ships were idle on the seas; in sooth,
Here was a fleet of warships, but no war.

I freighted them with cargoes of new trade,
Thus, out of strife, won victories of peace
That shame war's goals, however bright they be.
I sought for such as wrought each useful craft,
And failing here, I brought them from afar
To teach the arts of husbandry and peace.

The wasted villages were built again;
The priests proclaimed the ancient moot restored;
The ealdormen of highest lineage spake
And gave their rede to freemen of the shires,
Who lent applause with clash of spear and shield
As in the days of old. The gleemen sang
The Saxon lays to time the festive dance,
And blue-eyed maidens passed the mead-bowl round
While wassail echoed through the timbered hall.

There were no Saxon letters in the land,
But late I traced on parchment what is done
In Britain now, most worthy to be known
In future days. To thee I give the charge
To keep this *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,*
A fountain of our future history,
The first of books in our own language writ.

Thus have I turned to higher ways of good
And reverenced that Power that holdeth all
With strength and kindness in Eternal hands.
Thy piety and learning shall have fruit
In England when our earthly lives have passed
Beyond the dark of death. Be thou, my friend,
Patient and diligent. It is my hope
That here thy heart may find a pleasant home
And high reward—the joy of usefulness—
And every hour, acquittal at the bar
Of thine own conscience.

1911

BROWNING

Ah, if I might but find
Myself again some sunny afternoon,
Face turned to Florence, faring up that path
Beside the wall, crumbling and ivy-grown,
Where weeds and wildflowers choke the violets,
Bursting, where the chance waits, to sudden flame.

There, from that upper room whose oriel eye
Looked from its cranny in the old home wall
Down o'er the land,—you, Sister, will recall
The charmèd place—we saw the quiet road
Winding away into the wider world.

My memory clings to every dear old spot
Her presence hallowed. There's a sacred haunt
In old Siena, where my fig-tree grows—
She called it mine—'tis in the garden there
At Villa Alberti. Beneath its shade
She often sat. See! down the water here,
Across the harbour where the tall trees stand
Beside the stream. 'Tis just ten years ago,
We spent one day together there. A day
Whose memory haunts me like a heavenly dream.
O Sister, Sister, how I want her still!
Yet near and clear I hear her whisper small—
I blush for music when I hear that voice—
Forbid me Italy, at least awhile;
For love gives reason sovereignty, the deed
Bends to the will, and life is balanced true.
Thus the will drives, and reason guides where love,
Greatest and best, doth call. Sacred meanwhile
I'll keep my constant dream of Italy.
Who knows but I may yet, ere many years,
Rest 'neath *her* fig-tree—let me name it so.

Sedan is fallen and the noise of war
Has reached our lonely hermitage at last.
Into your eyes alarm puts questionings.
We'll cross the channel, if you will, until
This war-spent France is peaceful once again.

You tell me England gossips of my fame,
Admits my murder-story is a poem,
Reads it—in part, no doubt—professes joy
In Caponsacchi and Pompilia,
So honours me with noble gifts and fine
Opinions. Though she gave me little heed
For many years, my heart forgives her now.
She had a truer poet in our home;
One, to my mind, with far serener flight
On more spontaneous wing. This, England felt,
Enthroned a new Elizabeth, who grudged
Herself the greater fame that was not mine.

And, since you ask the meaning of it all,
Searcher of hearts was I. Each word, each deed,
Each lightest thought was label of a soul.
I pondered men and through their spirits peered,
Traced out their zig-zag courses, motives scanned.
My ardent soul assailed the public heart
To come at vivid life by every way
That winds conspicuous or obscure from out
Its deeps. I loved humanity, despised
Not fame; and yet, I trust I did not stoop
To win it. Many windows look on life;
I stood behind them all, and, looking through,
Discerned a manifold reality.
Disclosed to men their own true meaning; urged
To stand erect and plumb themselves, to mark
Their stature, pigmy or colossal; find

Their deeper roots, not in the earth and time,
Their richest fruitage, deeds that make love glad,
Their goal not in the grave.

As need was, first
I took all riddle-wise, as children do.
Life was ten thousand puzzles mixed, and seemed
Insoluble, and hence, for guessing at
Interminably, good. Could I but read
One line of what God had so dimly writ
Upon the page of life, might not the key
To all life's hieratic characters,
Therein disclosed, be mine?

One problem strange
That kept me guessing much and long was this:
Why are there riddles in our lives at all?
Doth God require obedience in the light
Of partial truth from him who knows no more?
Why is the parchment of the chart of life
A palimpsest whose deeper, truer guise
No eye can see except with labours vast
And pains to find the bright theophany?

I looked beneath the superposèd lines,
Half read, half guessed the hidden scriptures there,
And so this word deciphered: Time is not
A wedge that splits eternity; 'tis but
The upper wave, the spume, the rippling top
Of the deep ocean of eternal life,
That dures while all external things are done.

The soul of man, strong-rooted in the deeps,
Grows brave in conflicts, beautiful in storms,
Noble in tempests and magnanimous

In pain. Love chastens him who loves, with toils,
Inviting him, by labours of a god,
Like God to grow—for only thus he can—
And makes it possible to live God's life,
To feel His everlasting calm, to find
One deep eternal Love, else all's unknown.

If hellish tortures barred the downward road,
If mighty transports turned all hearts to heaven
With no endeavour, and no storm nor pain,
How could the spirit gain its fortitude,
Its strength and grace, its great-souled, god-like
power?
The soul that longs greatly to live must dare
Vicissitudes, and, with Promethean heart,
Challenge misfortune, pain, and tempests wild,
The wrack of nerves, and even death itself
For sake of love and life. Such is the cross
On which Love hangs undying, conquering all.

Life is the test of love, and love, of life.
Godlike endeavour is the way to God.
Life is the goal of life, and love, of love.
The only sin is not to try; 'tis good
To live courageously, for life supreme
Is love, and going is the goal.

This much
I read in Love's great palimpsest. This much
Is not a guess.

1911

CÆSAR

Think not, Calpurnia, that dreams
Shall bend me from my course. The concrete ill
Is better than false fears. To-day we urge
The war in Parthia, and Rome hath need
Of a strong hand at helm.

Could'st thou still love thy Cæsar if he hid
With blanchèd face from suppositious foes
Imaged in dreams, a Cæsar who would cower
At idle threat'nings of disastrous fate
With heart grown palpitant and fear-beseiged?
He would himself despise, know himself fall'n,
If any dim, phantasmal enemy
Should cow whom neither Spanish cavalcade,
Nor Afric spears, nor chariots of Gaul
Availed to 'fright.

'Tis now ten years agone
Since Cæsar's legions, having conquered Gaul,
To Britain sailed, but could not near the shore
In ships, so leapt full-armed into the sea.
The Britons met us with an equal zeal,
Engaged us fighting there, some to the knees,
Others to neck immersed. We gained the land—
Sore spent with wounds, with travail and hard strife,—
But he who stood the first upon that strand
Was Cæsar. On the frontier of the world
He stood in warrior-guise, Rome's latest word
Of conquest. Would'st thou now, divesting him
Of battle-gear, of soldier courage too,
Cage like a wren this bird of stormy wing
And bid him dream of when he soared aloft,
An eagle? . . . .

I would bind
With salutary law Rome's wayward heart,
Give strength and permanence to one great power,
The mother of a thousand lesser states.
"But can the thing be done?" Well may'st thou ask.
Can Cæsar's hand mix justice with his power,
Give tendency beneficent to might.
To overwhelm with law the incubus
Of wolfish greed, and stay the hands of those
Who rob the common purse? How Rome shall thrive
While these still live, even Cæsar cannot guess.
Trebonius, Cassius, Casca and the rest
Would tremble if they thought I deemed them foes,
But now as friends they meet me level-eyed,
Imagining they hide their jealousy.
They dare not come to me as open foes,
Unless, like coward wolves, they pool their nerve,
Thus trusting, each, the courage of the pack.

When Cæsar is no longer free in Rome
To go and come safe, and not warily,
But must go guarded, better were it far
His ghost were free to comrade with the dead,
To walk amid the hospitable years
A friend and guest of fame. Be Cæsar strong
Or bid him cease to be. Let not the past
For present weakness urge apologies,
But let him go forth free and masterful,
Walk ever thus untrammelled till he pass
Into the unplumbed deeps of history.
There nought shall bar the soul with boundaries
Or curb the mighty heart.
1912

COLUMBUS

Think me not weak,
Though tumults rising in my breaking heart
Stagger my speech. Thanks to your majesties
That ye devote one sovereign hour to him
Who thought in continents for Spain and you,
And broke a thousand steadfast barriers down
To push your standard even to the shores
Of Darien. Hear ye him patiently,
Judge ye his cause, and say in Justice' name
That he deserves his chains, is weak and base
And criminal and hath abused your trust;
Then will he don once more his iron gyves,
Go back to prison dark, count it his home,
And trust the estimate of life's avail
To time and generations yet to be.

I am as one that, mad with many wrongs,
Would proudly silent be, but that I know
Your noble will in face of such dire ills
Bids fortune robe herself in juster guise;
I therefore freely speak in mine own cause:—
Even from a boy, I lived with seas and stars;
I saw the sun above the Pyrenees
Go westward to the waters and afar,
O'er ocean, isle and continent, sweep on
Around the orbèd world. I broke the bars
Of ignorance and superstition's night,
And saw the future argosies of earth,
Led by your caravels, abridge the deep,
Unite the continents, annul the seas
And subjugate the world.

I told my dream
To Europe. When the priests of science heard,

They said: "Here is a knave with mind askew,
With crazy plan to find the farther east
By westward sailing; turning from his port
To come where he would go." Thus sped the years.
But when your vision, partnered with my zeal,
With compass, quadrant, astrolabe and ships,
I drove the old fear-goblins from the sea,
Flung wide the portals of the western main
And gave to men a new-found hemisphere,

Six times I crossed the deep and made the sea
A highway for the world. I stirred the soul
Of all true mariners. Already hath
Da Gama passed beyond the Cape of Storms
To India. Cabot of England, too,
Hath found north lands interminably vast,
And though I brought no wealth of gold to Spain,
Her empire in this new-found western clime
Shall give to her such dignity of power
That all the coming years shall hear and know
Your august names the better that ye gave
Your royal furtherance to one despised,
Of foreign birth.

And now detractors say
I smutched my fame, was cruel, tyrannous,
Incompetent. To such grave charge I turn:
Not claiming to be superhuman-wise,
But, given a convict crew from wholesome law
A thousand leagues removed, and not inured
To hardness in strange lands, I ask you now
Was this my task an easy enterprise?
Was that a selfish act that saved the lives
Of those who gave the world a continent?
Doth prudence rule with softness in such case?

The ship's log shows, in inky phrase, the facts
Laid bare which vindicate my cause.

All these,
Ye both have seen and scanned. And yet, mark ye,
I ask no pity on this snowy head
So early whitened by unfriendly storms.
All such infirmities with life will pass;
But lies are virulent as leprosy.
Let wrongs by falsehood done, go unredressed,
They leave for aye their drag of infamy,
Insult the memory of noble hearts
And plow the face of time with tears.

Some day
The truth shall give its freedom to my fame.
Then those who knew them falsehoods from the first,
With those who bred these calumnies, shall sink
To everlasting obloquy—their due.

I thank your majesties. 'Tis sweet to know
Your trust unbroken. Pardon me the hope
That when my promised freedom is restored,
With power to do what human strength can do,
My toils shall bring a nobler fame to those
Who furthered my emprise than had I won
Cipango's golden store or found a path
To India.

1911

COPERNICUS

"Why not imprint the book?"
Who serveth least doth make the greatest haste
And, having once discerned some shred of truth,
Is exercised thereby, immediately
To seek the housetop and inform the world.
The highest themes engender large repose,
The heart is fixt in firm serenity
And hastes not till its noble plans mature,
But when the great dynamic hour is come,
It moves with avalanche intensity
To live in the immeasurable years
Where ages are but moments.

Truth needs not
That any man be else than simply true;
Therefore I hasted not when law I learned
Yet found not equity; and medic lore,
But saw results both late and dubious.
My proper science is theology,—
But here, outside the art of kindliness,
Truth-labels on opinions pasted firm
Make up our creed. The priests of science too
Stamp dogmas with the seal of truth, and both
The church and science have their means to curb
Truth inconvenient.

Of all the arts
My thought had tried, none seemed to me more sure
Than mathematics when she stately walked
The pathways of the stars. The spheral ways
Are large. Disposed to such high themes,
The soul is girded with a fine reserve.
A thousand nights looked down upon my heart

And tuned its thought to empyrean tones
While free imagination toured the sky
And mapped the planet's courses, till at last
I found myself on one of them, elate,
Circling the sun.

I saw the earth no more
A centre of the planetary ways,
But moving silent in its cosmic path,
A little sister of great Jupiter.
My ripened age has reached threescore and ten,
And six-and-thirty years have passed since first
I saw the earth a little wanderer
Among the worlds. So now I am resolved
To send the manuscript to Nuremberg
To be imprinted there. My failing powers
Make instant furtherance of this design
Imperative if I would see the book
Before I die.

The mighty hemisphere
Columbus sought and found is better known
To even the very least geographer
Than e'er it was to him who found it first.
So will the key that I shall give to men
Unlock the golden gateway of the skies;
Shall make my thought a pilot through the deep,
And in the coming days a child shall know
The seas of light that float above the world,
The blue, mysterious, oceanic heavens,
More intimately than the Polish priest
Who first discerned how mightily the sun
Leads all his orbs and blazes out their way
Through the stupendous void.

1911

CROMWELL

Say not to me,
"Cromwell, thou diest." Save thy timid breath.
Do not the wild winds noise it o'er the world?
Shall he alone who made God's word his guide
And put the yoke of England on the seas
Not know the face of death when all God's foes
Whisper and say, "The Lord Protector dies"?

Suppose ye he will tremble, gasp, turn pale,
At hint of death, which he so often dared?
Life's shuttle drifts across the web of time,
And if posterity see but one strand
Of purpose fair, or trace amid the woof
One feeble pattern to some worthy end,
Life was not vain. My sword my spokesman was;
It speaks no more, yet all the world doth know
It curbed the pride of kings.

Play not the role
Of simulated tears, but draw ye near,
For there are some words still Cromwell would say
Even though his sword be silent. Nearer still,
Lest nature's furious voice baffle your ears
With roaring winds and thunders pierced with fire.
The toils of state—these do not matter much;
But that the people love not righteousness,
Know not reality, bowing their souls
To musty precedents—that matters much.
That warders of the realm would still with words
The groans that from the battle's whirlwind call;
With paper promises and inky lies
Would heal the hurt of England, matters more.

That they whose thought showeth no real fact;
Whose words show something other than their
thought;
Whose office, tricked with gaudy trappings, struts
So loud with blare of brass they cannot hear
The voice of God; so big with littleness,
They cannot see the lawful rights of man—
That matters all.

This too remember well—
I learned it late: None but a tyrant makes
That good prevail that is not in men's hearts,
And tyranny is questionable good.
Therefore must all men learn by liberty,
And with what pain their doings on them bring.

Give these my words to those who care to hear;
My thanks to you that ye report them true,
And for your patience now. I cannot hear
Your words, nor can I more, so stand apart,
That, undistracted by the storms of state
Or any human presence, I may come
Before the King of Kings in hope and faith
For pardon of my sins.
1911

ELIZABETH

I am too soon grown old.
The care of England through the troubled years,
While foes were plotting, courtiers flattering me,
Hath seared my heart and wintered my young blood.
My soul is sick of craft and sophistry.
Of those who sought the favor of the queen,
All came with protestations insincere;
Whose then the blame if I am bitter grown?

Stoutly I stood for England while her foes
With fury rent the continental lands;
Held back the rage of warrior-hearted chiefs
Who urged me to a strife. I kept aloof
From that wild scene where Europe was aflame;
So, while their thrones grew weak, England was
strong,
Without the cost of men or ships or gold.

Yet have I never lightly held in check
The fixèd will of Lords and Parliament;
But by concession kept my power secure
And England's welfare mine. I ne'er destroyed
My bitterest foe but he was England's too.
I gave my confidence to honest men,
And furtherance to all that was of worth.
And ever when the great of England fell
My heart was desolated with the land.

My kingdom doth with sorrow bear the loss
Of Spenser. Hast thou scanned his *Faerie Queen?*
'Tis such a web of dreams as no one else
In all the realm so dext'rously could spin.
When first I tasted of his art, I praised
His talent to Lord Burleigh, forasmuch
As no great earl by taking utmost thought
And wasting time and candle through the night,
Has framed one noble stanza like to those
In which this Spenser hath ensured my name
Against the tooth of time. Cecil opposed
My wish to pay some fifty public pounds
A year to give the poet sustenance.
He found the queen was firm; the pounds were paid.
Some dreams are stronger than a battle host.
A phrase well turned may beat an empire down.
To feed the hungry heart doth more avail

Than to defeat a thousand armèd foes
Or cram with bread the world's cavernous maw.

Now Burleigh too is dead, and Walsingham.
Their statecraft was a bulwark to the throne.
Their wisdom guided all my councillors.
How much our strength and fame are due to these,
Who shall decide? The lustre of my reign
Is noonday bright with fame of those who fill
The storied years with wisdom, daring deed,
And lofty song. To know great men from small
Is greatness; in which test I sometimes fail.
Nathless, I wis that England hath those still
In whom are found the unmistaken marks
Of strong, full-natured manhood. One day's fight
Against the mightiest squadron of the world
Gave Howard, Hawkins, Drake and Frobisher
Renown more permanent upon the main
Than all their pirate exploits of the sea,
And humbled Philip's widowed heart far more
Than my emphatic "No!" Are these men great?
They have a wit that knows the ocean storms,
And that, I trow, is greatness in some sort.
Our sex gives honour to robust renown,
But brooks no dalliance with a coward heart.

John Knox hath honest strength and sturdiness.
Fanatic, churlish, dour, yet all sincere,
He wins the Scottish heart to solemn ways
With quite infectious power. I'm proud of him
That he is strong, yet cannot like his ways.
And there are those whose wisdom doth avail
To open mines disclosing richest veins
Of knowledge. Bacon tells of roads to truth

More sure than those we travel on. We trust,
Saith he, foundations insecure, receive
Traditions, cherish false philosophies,
And imitate the wise, stuffing our skulls
With crude opinions, as my father's men
Stuffed out their clothing when the king grew fat.

Since Philip Sidney is with us no more,
None can with Raleigh meet the sudden call
For subtle courtesie and nimble wit—
A trait that pleaseth me. But over all
Those stars that beam across our firmament
The glory of their constellated blaze,
Making the times august and England great,
Will Shakespeare's steadily increasing light
Doth wax most bright and as a virginal,
When touched by master fingers, lifts the soul
To heights of song, the pen, in Shakespeare's hand
Becomes an instrument of flame, a torch,
A beacon fire. His art transfigures life,
Turns ink to music, words to sculptured wit.
From out his vivid portraiture plain facts
Leap to an unsuspected dignity.
The noblest dramas flow in wizard phrase
Out of his dreams. Deeds slough their dross,
And days are heralds of the golden age.

Remove my gown and farthingale and all
That garnisheth with foreign youthfulness
Hateful to me seeing I need it so.
To-morrow, to the knightly jousts I ride.
Let slumber work meanwhile, else weariness,
In every feature speaking, shall defy
Thine utmost heart.

1911

GALILEO

A strange misapprehension 'tis—and yet
Small wonder in a world of sense—that all
That moves with us seems motionless, while all
Apart from us appears processional.
The common mind thinks all beneath is fixed,
Deems all above a flux, while the unseen
Seems negligible, evanescent, aye,
Unpractical.

Quest of reality
Means progress, but discoverers disturb
Opinions and to all appearances
Unprop the world. When truth invincible
Bears down into an ocean of wrong thought
And all the fixed conviction of the past
Is staggered, jolted, dislocated, found
Dissolved, it is small wonder if the priests
Would kill the prophets, thinking thus to stem
The rivers of inrushing light.

Arouse
The wonder in the soul that all may know
How this green hanging-garden of a world
Is swinging on through space upheld by law,
Or—what you will—a hand, a heart, a God
Who holds His star-dominions up and bears
Them on through the ethereal deep! but if
Upon a cross of prejudice you nail
This wonder, when a thousand years have passed
Men will, as now, be ignorant and blind
Assuming still that all that is unseen
Is nought.

Here stop and think. What if the laws
That move the pendulum, the meteorite,
The star, are but one law, which neither I
Have found, nor Kepler, nor Copernicus!
They both are dead, and I am old. These eyes,
That saw so much ne'er seen before, are blind.
These ears are deaf that suffered not the lips
To speak until I heard God's voice. This form
Is vexed with twinge and disability.
But soon a greater Kepler may arise,
A new Copernicus, to bind, with one
Great law, the atom to the star, and find
One order of majestic harmony
Throughout the universe.

No falsity
Can choke the Truth; no prejudice can dim
The white light of the Law. A fact when found
And firm-establisht by experiment
Can have no sudden revocation. Who
Shall countermand a fast-entrenchèd law?
No prestige of authority can save
A lie, though forced from Galileo's lips
By fire, amid the drift of winnowing light
That sifts the truth as on the wind-swept hills.
The formulæ of men, by councils sealed,
Must by experience be signatured,
For only thus the authenticity
Of God's own word is known.

Now must I rest,
So sore I feel the burden of the years.
My force is spent. Lend me your strength, I pray,
And lead me to my couch.

1910

GOETHE

Thou cravest truth?
A goodly quest; but truth is not a gift
From man to man imparted, as the rich
Give their estates to next of kin; my wish,
However worthy, is but impotent;
I only point the pathway for thy feet.

That which appeals to thee, go forth and live.
When thou hast made truth valid by thy deed,
'Tis thine, but it is nothing to thee else.
The loom of time moves ceaselessly, and thou
With nimble shuttle—brain and heart and will,
Dost weave for thee the garment of thy mind
Whose length and depth and breadth thy stature is.
What fabric thou dost choose, thy life shall wear,
And, clad therein, confront the blaze of day,
The bar of thine own soul, the eyes of God.
When thou the web of life hast fully planned,
Noble or base, it still is what thou art;
Whate'er thou willest, that thy life shall be.

Let not the fickle spirit of the times
Warp the true judgments of experience;
And suffer not the noises of the day
To drown the mandate of thine own ideal.
Lest time-born satisfactions, too much craved
And hardly won, rob thee of sovereignty.
And yet, taste thou life's fruit and tasting find
The root of wisdom and the fount of strength;
In faith inspired of deed, all doubt shall die.

With iron key of stern analysis,
Go, try the door of life's realities,
Which passing through, thy soul shall then be free.
Of pleasure's dalliance bereft, whine not,
But gird thy soul and cut adrift from death.
Rage not but run if thou would'st win the race.

Know thou thyself, weaver of destiny;
A ruddy spark that stirs the wick to flame;
A light that kills the dark; a cooling breeze
That, blowing softly on time's fevered cheek,
Comforts the heart as with Æolian song;
A ripple of that sea whose billow-heave
Creates the mountain and reshapes the world;
A little stream that grows to boundlessness
And swells to music of the Heart of God;
A drift of stars like snowflakes moving down
The soundless arch of night. Nay more, a thought
So clear, its image grows in magnitude
And power and speaks new worlds to being; grows
Till art is beauty and all life is song.

To know thyself aright is thus thyself
To know. The way leads through the stressful flood
And winds up wearily o'er hills of toil
Where peak on peak to higher life ascends
On summits white and clear. Faint not, be strong;
Beyond the mountain-line of faith lies heaven.
With great-souled deed program the years;
Beggar thy baser being till it die,
Then rise, soul-sinewed, lord of circumstance,
And shape the years to universal good.
1911

GUTENBERG

Thy wit,
Herr Faust, will guess aright the cause for which
I work in secrecy. The populace
Pronounce it devil's work; the more devout
Acclaim the wonder as divinely wrought;
But since a monetary furtherance
Is sought, we'll sift this business now in that
Behoof; I, with the hope that gold may pour
From thy too bulging purse to prop and urge
The enterprise; thou, that a golden stream
May flow from this new fountain.

List! Mein Herr.
I'll print an hundred pages like to this—
Observe it hath just six-and-thirty lines
Of Holy Scripture—while thy scrivener
Shall write but one. My page, its thought shall show
More vivid and with fairer face, yet vie
In teeming multiplicity with Eve's
Prolific motherhood; for while my forms
Dismiss the calamus and spurn the scribe's
Slow pace, they print with artistry that shames
The stylus. Be my work one-tenth the price
And better done—thou know'st it is, full well—
And thou dost take effective interest here,
Thy wealth shall rise to opulence, and all
The world shall be instructed in the Word.
If thine assistant purse avail mine art,
Then shalt thou know forthwith each step by which
This thing so strange is wrought. Hast thou meanwhile
Considered well the terms on which we meet? . . . .
Aye? Good! Then, since we are agreed, we'll sign

And seal the instrument, which, as thou seest,
Is couched in beauty such as never scribe
Could have accomplishèd. . . . . .

That being done,
Hear me while I the secret tell of how
I worked this wonder. First I graved in wood,
And afterwards in lead, such forms as this,
Which is the letter "A."—Thine eye is first,
After mine own, to see that leaden face.—
But such a task was slow and wearisome.
That I might quite escape its tedium,
I made a flux to mould my formes in sand,
Then deftly smoothed these counterparts of thought,
Which, when composed to words and sentences
And lockt in formes, were thus made permanent
As there was need.

Now follow me within . . . .
Upon this tablet is the final forme
From which that page of six-and-thirty lines
Which thou hast seen was made. But there was need,
Before the full result was yet attained,
Of ink so siccative and even-laid
Upon these leaden faces, that the print
Should stand out fair and clear. This I contrived;
And last of all, I made this press to hold
The inkèd forme and print it quicklier
Upon the page. I'll fix it now and make
In one brief moment what thy swiftest scribe
Had taken hours to achieve. . . . . .

Ach! Lieber Herr,
Well mayst thou gasp. The future waits in awe;
The past, subservient. All the sages pour

Their wisdom at our feet, beseeching us
To give them immortality and thou
Dost hold with me the nexus of the years
'Twixt ancient and to come. By this our craft
We two shall give our age the noblest words
Of Aristotle and Pythagoras,
Of Plato, Socrates, and those stern seers
Who spake Jehovah's word to Israel.
Was ever such a gift in mortal hand?
And shall it not be chiefest of our care
To keep this charge and serve humanity
In such a high vocation?

Ah, I see
A wearied patience sits upon thy mien.
Thy goldsmith's heart doth more appraise the hope
Of large enrichment of its treasury.
In this we are not one; yet I will keep
Our pact, and life's high purpose
Shall not fail.

1912

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

As into night's dark velvet dome
A crystal star swings upward from the deep
And gleams across the waters, so he came.
No thunders shook the world; the vaulted blue
Was arched serenely to the bluer sea.
The banners of the flaming dawn were flung
O'er Nevis and afar, when lo! love-born,
And loftily conceived in mind and heart,
This child of destiny first saw the light.

Into that swirling gulf, the red-hot core
Of time's most central revolution, hurled
By hurricane and fire, his soul was fed
On tempests while his child-like heart beguiled
World-music from the surges, in the foam
Found exaltation, conquering the storm
With weapons of the light.

The days were dark
And perilous the paths. The early blasts
That beat upon his honoured chieftain's head
Were tempered by his labours and his love.
Soon as the winds that swept across the sea
Had passed, and while the foaming steeds of state
Were champing on their bits, and eager stood
Impatient of the rein, ambitious each
To lead the cavalcade, he forged those bonds
That to the central purpose held them all
In federal unity, devising laws
To hold the nation firm amid the flood.

He sought and found highroads of wealth and peace
And set the people in the prosperous ways
Of enterprise. From all entanglements
With foreign states held her hot blood aloof,
And won their trust with honour.

Now shall stand,
To speak his worth, one fitting monument,
That mighty modern state his vision planned.
But who shall tell the kindness of his heart,
The gentleness and goodness, all those charms
That made his presence such a joyous thing
To those who felt its sway?

America,
The ages wait, and from their starry spheres,

The patient eyes of immortality,
Hope-lured, look wistful on, while self-regard
Bends justice to the subtle curves of greed
And warps the law.

Shades of the mighty dead!
Some flaming word of love and wrath resound
To call the souls of men to sacrifice.
So shall that splendid dream that flamed his heart—
A federal union of these several states
With central oversight in large affairs—
Become the hope of nations and their plan
For sane and just dominion of a world
Too small for independent governments,
Too vast for rule by persons.
1917

HELOISE

Thou art a lover too. Nay, do not start.
Love in a convent? Well, that's not so rare,
For there, sometimes, do live most constant loves.
And yet, dear Sister, do not me mistake;
I no confession seek; I am no priest;
And could not shrive thee even hadst thou need.
Yet would I make confession unto thee,
For thou hast power to help me beyond words
Or recompense. Thy heart is willing too;
I read it in thy face.

Come then with me,
Too long have I inflamed thy wonder now.
Well dost thou know the fountain of my grief,
But 'tis a new and strange solemnity
Unto the cause of which we now are come.

This leaden casket in the rock-hewn niche
Inurns the dust of Abelard. Last eve
It was not here, but while the voiceless night
Urged down the dark the westward-going stars,
This leaden casket reached the Paraclete,
And first it is my task to tell thee how.

Let me not dwell too long upon the woes
And sorrows of my lover-friend. Enough,
That, doomed to silence, and his scriptures burned,
For just redress he would have gone to Rome,
But coming unto Clugni in the way,
Found Peter's love and hospitality,
And being weak and spent, could go no more;
So gave his days to holy offices,
To frequent prayers, to fastings self-imposed;
Meanwhile disclosing to his saintly host
That flame of love divine he bore to me,
The intolerance that kept our lives apart,
Defying our unconquerable love;
Told how the fret of our impulsive youth,
By powers repressive goaded, plucked the fruit
Of our desire, and, when 'twas known, the Church,
By secret bans, its reputation purged
Of all the taint our private sins had wrought. . . .

Alas, I tax thy strength. Courage, dear heart,
On this green, mossy bank rest for awhile,
And I'll be brief. . . . . I was about to tell
How he disclosed to Peter all our fate,
Told of our child who died so long ago,
My child and Abelard's, and ere he closed
The tale of agony, he charged his friend
To lay his dust within the Paraclete,
That so he might be near the one beloved

For whom in life his hungry heart had yearned;
To all of which the saintly man gave ear.

So when the last, faint, flickering wave of life
Had vanished from the pulse of Abelard,
And he was buried in the silent vault
At Clugni—now I speak for thee alone—
When darkness hid the deed from scandal's eye,
Peter exhumed the casket and its guest,
And brought them under cover of the night
To me, deeming such wondrous love as ours
More sacred than the law; resolving, too,
That we who were so cruelly apart
In life, in death should be as one. So there,
In that grim vault, by flickering candle-light,
I did receive them—mark our footprints here—
The saint belovèd and the lover-saint.
I stood obscure amid the recent gloom,
Taper in hand to mitigate the night,
My heart to firm repression schooled, the while
The priest of Clugni read the words of life,
Making them eloquent with many sobs,
And adding unto weeping, prayers that we,
The quick and dead, might be no more apart,
But one, body and spirit, evermore.
And now I charge thee by that living love
That burneth ever as a sacred fire
Upon the altar of thy faithful heart,
Be thou untimid in my love's stern task;
Or if thou be not moved by my poor words,
Then let thy pity hear the torrent surge
Of that resistlessly appealing flood
That poured in fiery phrase, intense as flame,
From lips of Abelard.

My prayer is this:
When I am dead and all those cruel ones
Who kept me all my life out of my heaven
Are fed with empty phrase, come, O my Friend,
Bring those unto this place who know the art
To obey thy word,—thou shalt be abbess then—
Give thy command to ope these leaden walls
And lay my form with that of him I love.
There let our hungry dust, so long apart,
Be one forever as our spirits are.
Such is my prayer to thee.

And to the rest,
That they shall hold the name of Hélöise
In honour of the love of Abelard.

1911

HILDEBRAND

Henry! He is the enemy of God,
In whose high stead I stand. And yet thou dost
Request his pardon here! Thou canst not, then,
Our cause of conflict know. Mindful to shun
The cares of state, three prelates I advanced
To wield the sceptre of the Holy See;
But temporal power corrupted, and they shrank
To merest cyphers on the world's dark slate;
So, when was heard once more the heavenly call,
And I was chosen by the cardinals,
I sought to purge the church of two dark sins,
The marriage of her priests, and that foul curse,
Deep-rooted and strong-sanctioned by the great,
The sale of sacred offices for gold.

Too great such task for man, unhelped of God.
Now must the vicar of the Christ be strong
To tear the roots of personal, deep love
From out the tender heart, and leave it bare
And bleeding, till ten thousand tongues
Of wives forsaken, children fatherless,
Curse Hildebrand. Was that a task to choose?
Ah, now I see the charge that flames thine eyes
And reprobates my deed. And yet, O thou
Dear heart of Tuscany, he who hath vowed
His life to God must have no concubine.
How shall he who is father of his own
Be father to the family of God?
And how, the shepherd of a private flock,
Keep safe the fold of Christ?

With bare, cold feet,
The heir of Charlemagne, whom God deposed,
Now begs admittance at Canossa's gate,
Where sleet lies still unmelted on the stones.
This Henry traded in the things of God,
Made boys archbishops, gluttons cardinals, and sold
The honour of the triple crown,
Estranging to the prodigal for gold
The powers pertinent to Christ alone.
And now, I would that he were penitent,
But hast thou counted what the cost might be
If he were not? What to the Church it means
If restoration of his power and state
Should give him boldness to resist my will,
To thwart the mighty purpose of my soul,
And shake the strong foundations of my throne?
Yet firm assurance is not in man's gift,
He knoweth not the fountains of the heart;
God give me insight into Henry's soul

That I with grace, interpreting his prayer,
May Christ's free mercy unto him extend
In his great need, that he may yet obey
And to obedience turn the people's hearts.
If pity doth with God's high purpose move,
I'll give the penitent free pardon now.
Thou goest? . . . . It is well——a little while.

Pietro! Truth, thou hast a holy name.
Now by the name of San Pietro, hear.
Go thou beyond Canossa's outer door,
There thou shalt find him who with feet unshod
Hath waited wearily for three long days.
Bring him to me with gentle courtesy,
And waste nor words nor time. May God dispose
Thy deed to His own will. . . . . .

So soon returned?
Now leave us here alone.

Henry, my son,
Thou knowest I would build a sovereignty
In God's high name o'er all the crowns of earth.
Vicar of Christ, illumined by his light,
This hand would rule the destinies of men,
And teach God's love and glory to all lands.
Lo, I would found a state eternal, strong,
With God as king to whom all kings should bow,
With love as law and truth as changeless guide,
With heavenly light, truth's sure interpreter.
Wilt thou in such a righteous kingdom reign,
Serve well and faithfully the King of Kings,
And give God's people their inheritance? . . . .
Then rise to higher strength and dignity,
Victorious deed and wide imperial power;

But give thy power to those who spoil the poor,
And I will make thy name anathema.
Make Christ the king and I will crown thy power
With permanence, thine arms with victory,
And thou shalt be the potentate of time.
Then shall Christ rule in every sovereignty,
And reign alone by right of heaven's decree;
The Church shall stand in purity and strength,
And priests hold power from God, serve Him alone
And be responsive only to their Head.
Now since thou dost consent to serve thy God,
Rise, Henry, king and emperor of Rome.
Be thou henceforth the friend of God and man,
And being such, then shalt thou be mine too;
I pardon in the name of Christ, thy sins,
And thee to high imperial state, restore.
Pietro! Let the servitors attend;
Choose out such vesture as befits a king;
With food and rest refresh this royal guest,
And when he wills it, bring him back to me.
Meanwhile, how best to stem that Moslem flood
That desecrates the Holy Sepulchre
Shall exercise the current of my thought.
Adieu, Imperial Heart. I pray God's peace
Be thine.

1913

ISRAEL

My days, O King,
Are few and evil. I have not attained
Unto the age at which my fathers died;
Yet do I lift my feeble hands to heaven
And pray that Pharaoh's land may know God's
smile;

The Lord Jehovah hear my prayer, and bless
And prosper Egypt with His power and peace.

Thy majesty doth bend to ask of me
That out of long experience I should pluck
Some fruit for royal tasting. I could wish
Such enterprise were worthier of thine ear,
But since thou dost command me, I obey
And briefly show the purport of my years.

Know, then, O King, that in my early youth
I, with a mess of lentils, basely bought
My brother's birthright. What I should have given
For pity of his need, I bartered with;
I worsted him for gain, deceived my sire,
Estranged the dear ones of my heart and home,
And cursed my soul with dearth and banishment.
I sought my uncle's house, bargained with God,
Deceived, and toiled and loved, and was deceived.
But when my artful soul, by scheming, gained
The wealth I toiled for, made my kinsman poor,
His daughters mine, his substance too, I turned
And got me hence, heart-hungry for my home.
When he pursued, I made an ample peace.
Costly to him, his love my sure ally,
For all that now was mine was dear to him.

Down through the vale of Gilead I moved,
And, coming leisurely to Jabbok's ford,
Was resting in my tent beside the stream,
When lo, there came two messengers in haste
With word that Esau, with four hundred men,
Was coming north from Edom. His intent,
Conscience to me made clear. How could I dare
To meet the force of his uncumbered arms?
Devising then my scheme of cowardice,

I thought to bribe him with o'erwhelming gifts,
Hoping that these his anger might assuage,
Even to the last scruple of his wrongs.
Yet fear was growing in my heart; my plan,
Frail as the bubble on the tossing surge,
Could not restore those benisons of peace,
A father's blessing and a brother's love,
Nor bring me back the joys of innocence.

My deeds denounced my heart, yet slandered not.
What agonies were mine! How shall I paint
The Tophet picture of those torturing hours!
I fain would trust thy fancy's defter brush
To flame the canvas with its proper fires.
The root of base, immedicable wrongs
'Gainst others wrought, I found in what I was.
The crush of threatened woes, cursing my deeds,
Was like a long ghost-finger to my soul,
Beck'ning to the abyss, and all the while,
I heard Jehovah's fiery word, "Repent!"

That night, no sleep I knew. The white star-streams,
The murmuring ford, the lowing of the herds,
Were nought to my unconscious sense, for there
I found the angel of the Lord, the man
I should have been, Messiah now, to me.
I faced the perfect life, and far beneath,
I marked the utter failure of my own;
My life, my soul, my self, were sin. O God,
I cried, deliver me from what I am
And make me what Thy love had patterned me.

The night was nought. It passed me like the dark
That shows the heavens deeper than my thought,
But ends in sun-bright day, for in the morn,—

That hour when truth emerges from its haze
And comes to man as naked as to God—
Two men contended in the spectral dawn,
The man I was and he who was to be.
That vision of the Prince of God I held
Until my soul was girded with the power
Of strange, new peace. When day shone o'er the hills,
Before the sun had risen to high noon,
Esau, the prince of Edom, was my friend,
Jacob was dead, and I was Israel.

Nought now remains to me of that old past
Save that I halt in life and limb. In life,
For lack of perfectness, in limb, because
The dews were chill that night in Gilead.
And now my tale is done, save one bright dream:
Thou seest Joseph here, my well-beloved,
Who by thy grace is raised to seats of power.
I loved his mother with so great a love
That when she died, ere that sad journey's close,
And I had piled a cairn beside the road
To mark her tomb at Bethlehem Ephrata,
Life lost its glory, save for those two sons
In whom I saw her face rejuvenate.
Yet seemed the world without her presence void;
Her love is still through all the lonely years
A fadeless memory, cherished beyond
All earthly joys. So, lonely here I wait
And pray my years be few, if, as some dream,
Sweet death shall bring the loved back to their own.
This is my dream, my hope, my prayer. O King,
Thou hast a human heart. . . . Forgive these tears.

1912

JEANNE D'ARC

I come to thee, O Prince—
Though overbold I seem for one so young—
Moved by my love for France the beautiful,
But more by strict obedience to Heaven
Whose words so bade. Therefore I pray thee now
Bear with me patiently the while I tell
The will of God as it of late hath come
To me in voices of His messengers.

Since thou dost ask, I am of Domremy,
A little village where the morning sun
Bursts brightly o'er the blue Alsatian hills,
And wistful flow'rets, turning heavenwards,
Receive upon their lips God's kiss of light.
There did I learn to sew and spin and pray,
And little else, but to obey my Lord.
My soul was glad, and in the strength of God,
I lived content in faith's simplicity.

Then fell the arm of England, stroke on stroke,
And marred my steadfast peace. Each added woe
Was burdened on my soul. Each sad reverse
Filled my sore heart with mourning and with pain
Till from my mute despair, I cried to heaven
And fasted daily, that the power of God
Might curb the foes of France, restore the land,
And give to thee thy throne.

So passed the years
In painfulest defeat that trailed in dust
The heraldry of France. With prayers and tears,
The soul in me grew strong, my vision cleared,
And ofttimes, when the stars hung o'er the land
And earth was brooding 'neath the hovering night,

Clear voices from the awesome silence fell,
With buoyant strength filled my uplifted heart,
And kindled my young soul with freedom's fire.
They bade me come to thee at Orleans,
Procure from thee such armour as was fit,
Go where the stress of siege most hotly pressed,
Nerve France with courage, cheer faint hearts with
hope,
Do for relief what circumstance should urge,
And lead to victory the Frankish hosts.

Already have my fateful stars giv'n strength,
Through stress of perilous ways, to come to thee,
Confirming what the voice of Heaven proclaimed.
Give, then, such armour as befits my youth,
A horse that knoweth battle, and I go,
A knight of France by thine authority,
And strengthened by the voices of the Light,
To make thee king before the flying year
Shall reach its winter round.

Thou askest me
My age? Urge not against this enterprise
My tender years. The softness of my youth
Cannot defeat the purpose of the skies.
Though sixteen summers measure all my days,
God hath the power of eternal years;
Shall He not give His word accomplishment?

But how shall faith that asketh signs be strong?
Wise head, weak heart, were mine in such a case.
'Tis hearts of strength that win the battle's crown;
Far wiser heads than mine are losing France.
Give rein to my strong heart, by faith upheld,
Then thy fine reason shall make good her claim.

The Voices say to me, "Do this," but thou:
"How knowest thou 'tis God that speaks, or that
"Twill be the better if thou dost obey?"
My answer is the present state of France.
Behold her wounds! What could be worse than now?
Give me a sword and arms, a palfrey white,
Emblem of victory; man-girded, I,
With faith in God's strong hand, shall bring thee peace
And eke the crown of France.

1911

LA SALLE

(*To Henry de Tonti*)

Hear that whining cry! . . . .
A porcupine fretting the wilderness,
That sea of subtle sounds and silences,
The lisping leaves, the grace-notes of the rain,
The choral birds, the cry of timid things
When lightning's sudden rapier stabs the dark.
How solemn is the fluting of the winds
Whose clarion voice the thunder's monotone
Preludes, before the great crescendo bursts
To one wild blare of trumpet, cymbal, drum,—
The lesser throats of song all mute amid
The crash of that tremendous orchestra.

The virgin heart of this old wilderness
Is fickle as an April morn, now calm
As tropic night; anon, tossed and distraught
By all the wild artillery of the storm.

How voluble, in crowds, the speech of man,
But in the mighty woods, how pitiful!
And yet, I would my lips were eloquent
As hermit Peter's when he moved the kings
To match his ardour with their chivalry.
Then would we shake a riper, rosier fruit
Into the lap of faith, flame all the days
With beacons of immortal deed, and move
Across the astonished years with such a stride
As would transmute this trackless continent.

'Tis as thou sayest, Tonti: Had we here,
For reinforcement of our enterprise,
What France now fondly wastes on parasites
And breeders of decay, then would our souls
Great tasks essay beyond a hero's dream;
But now, since I must pay this debt of France,
I halt the affairs of half a hemisphere,
Hold back this starry opportunity,
And with my guides traverse a thousand leagues
Of stream and wild, to trade in fetid pelts
Before our eager feet shall win to walk
In high illustrious roads.

Duplicity
Slime-tracks our ways, shadows our purposes.
Thee only and the Governeur, I dare to trust.
True, thou art not of France; but hearts like thine
Are priceless whatsoever state they serve,
Tonti and Frontenac—two men all true—
Are quite enough to fill my ample cup
Of friendship to the brim and overflow,
Ah, how I wish we had even now, though late,
For all these skulking traitors, honest men,
Who, lacking vision, would give heed to mine.

Then would we set this North America
A blazing jewel in the crown of France,
And give these bronzèd children of the wild
A better faith.

The lordly Iroquois,
The docile Illinois and stately Sioux,
Must find me strong and reticent and stern;
Therefore my words must fateful be and grave
As most befits the herald of the king.
'Twas never mine to rule in courtly way
Or bend my course to any urge of fear,
How could I be thy friend and be afraid?
Why should we ever stoop to weak defense,
Or bow the august stature of our souls
To levels lower than the ancient stars?

Ah, Friend, even my slow lips grow eloquent
Beneath thy constant and inspiring faith.
How great we are in presence of a friend!
Would France achieve high projects, she must feel
The urgent impulse of that mighty dream
That storms across our hearts, and rise in deed
To its accomplishment. The lion's cubs,
At large, even now, in French America,
Push all their strength against our fortresses
And from the field and farm, beloved of God,
Would drift to the devices of the mart.

On this starved rock we'll build impregnable
A fort with face of fire. This thou shalt hold
While I adventure forth to Canada,
And thence to mine own land across the seas,
To France belovèd, France the beautiful,
For convoys from the king. These will he give

When I persuade him, as I will, that here,
Where uplands pour their tributary streams
Into the universal flood; here where
Untracked, interminable forests lie,
And wide savannahs, thou and I will found
Dominions vaster than the Cæsars knew
Or Alexander dreamed.

1917

LEONARDO

Fill now your eye with that imperious glow
That doth pertain unto Milano's Duke.
Breathe mighty purpose. Make your form alert
With energy, yet lose not that fine poise
Which confidence and lofty courage give
To masterful design, the assurance bold
That fears no weak defect of its own powers.

Let us dispose this hand more livingly. . . . .
So! Now it speaks. That's good. Thanks to the Fra
Who pictures angels, painting has of late
The landscape dared. His perfect dew-lipt flowers
Make nature dearer to humanity,
And bridge the yawning chasm 'twixt modernness
And ancient unreality. If truth
In pigments speak, then must they show the mind
In man's or nature's countenance. The form
Must voice the soul. To this sure end doth art,
By inspiration moved, on canvas show
As high a merit as the purpose wills.
What is not in the soul, no brush achieves;
All limits and all barriers are there.

For him who wills determinedly to do
All that is God-inspired and nothing else,
Full opportunity springs everywhere.

Ah, now I catch a gleam of some strong urge
That fires your soul to strenuous deed, and fills
Your eye with light of projects unattained.
If I could paint that dream and make it look
Out of the forefront of my canvas here
As now it gilds the blue sky of your hope
With sun-illumined thought, that were to fix
Your soul upon the gallery-wall of time.

Upon his canvas, Botticelli paints
The flower, the cloud, the mount, some hint of sea
With faithfulness, sets in the human face
The dawn of true sincerity; but this
Still youthful Michelangelo o'ertops
The art of all the centuries. His eye
Sees to the core of Art. A Titan, he,
Whose soul breathes vastness of design that shames
The best performances of other men.
His protean genius is wedded, too,
With such rare industry that if the gods
Give him but half his years, his work shall match
The great Athenian torsos; from his soul
Colossal toils pour forth the awful power
And grace of Phidias and Praxiteles.

The brush is art's most fertile instrument;
Gives fantasy and dream the widest range
Of imagery. The sculptor's work is bold,
But obvious. The beauty of a god
That looks out of the Parian rock and smiles,
Is all too soon, in one brief moment, seen;

For that rough stone, a stone-faced god remains;
No more. No atmosphere enwreathes its face,
Nor mystic awe attests its deity;
No lightnings pierce its shades. No voice is heard
Of Sinai's thunders or Olympian storms.
The chiseled god is but a stark, white stone.
No immanent ethereality
Doth make the heart with late surprise upleap.

'Tis sadder still with song that perisheth
At birth, and in its own creation dies.
It leaves no echo in the silent void
Grown drearier by the memory of its voice.
Far rather would I toil in enginery
Than be a sculptor or compose a song.
To help a Cæsar or a Hannibal
Transcend the Alps or catapult devise;
To bridge a chasm or build a wall, conceive
A plan that no man's wit can stultify,
Is better than to make a stone god smile.

The greatest things are the invisible.
If Michelangelo will paint the dreams
Of his great soul in forms that think and feel
And act like men, as he of all men can,
His name shall dominate the realms of Art.
For painting doth the living beauty hide
From coarse invasions of the common eye,
Protecting with deep shades of mystery
From desecrating ravishment of light.
Here meets the soul with subtle, silent calls
To consciousness of pregnant, dim beyonds,
And finds in shadows more than light reveals.
The eye grows penetrant of deepest shades,
Hears harmonies of rare infinitudes,
Finds vast concerns in dark, prolific deeps.

Now Vincian to your task. Will not your Grace
With speech give wing to time while I display
On this white field the image of your soul?

1912

LUTHER

Behold me, weary of the world!
Half blind and agèd, worn and spiritless,
I long for rest. As goes the stranger guest
Forth from the inn, thus shall my soul go forth.
Nor shall I quit the world reluctantly.
E'er since I nailed the theses on the door
In Wittenberg, life has been ceaseless storm.
But when I met the conclave of the emperor,
I was not awed by their august estate.
The full impact of strong insurgent truth
Beat on the gates of my poor utterance,
Dissolved the darkness with the word of light
And stirred the waters of a stagnant thought
To such effect that Europe was appalled.
In that great hour was focused in my voice
The light of centuries long passed away,
Blinded to darkness by that recreant power
That should have been truth's window.

The last prop
That buttressed up titanic mountain snows
I pushed away. Then came the grind and crash,
The thunder of the roaring avalanche.
Yet was there greater task for Luther set,
So I was held secure.

Then it was known
That every man may come priestless to God,
And read His word and hear and understand;
But how, unless the Scriptures were at hand
In German speech? This labour too was mine.
And now, the Bible's in our common tongue—
My gift to Germany. It cost me toil
That love alone could give. But human love
Is all divine when it gives all for love
And conquers all. My tree of life took root
The deeper, farther sunward grew, when it
By winds was buffeted. So was it in
The wildest storms I knew. My soul, set free
From superstition by the open word,
Found truth's emancipation dearer far
By contrast with the gloom.

When toil is past,
'Tis pleasure seeing seed transformed to fruit.
In this hard task, my life its highest word
Hath spoken, here I lay my love's best gift
Upon the altar of a nation's heart.
Our people were adrift with orders sealed,
And all the charted purpose of the King
Locked in a language none of them could know.
I spent my powers in the mighty task
And put that chart into the common speech,
So spake God's thought in strong, and vivid phrase
To human hearts that fain would know
The purport of the eternal Will.

This word
Shall lustre all the earth with truth and light,
Shall robe the sense and heart with pulsing song
Throughout these sunlit lands. Experience

Shall flame to this white torch or else expire.
To this great pattern let men fit their thought;
In this pure mirror let them perfect life.
Here is their chart.

To show the thought of God
In lofty phrase, doth, by so high a use,
Make common language fine. In this, God's word,
I give a nobler speech to Germany.
Oh, how this word shall forth on wings of flame!
These tongues of fire, in forms of Gutenberg,
Shall blaze through Germany their tracks of light,
And make this land the birthplace of the day;
For I have broken down a wall of night
So dense, so high, that for long centuries,
Its face beat back the morning.

1911

MORRIS

There was a time when wraiths of grey-white mist,
Like a mirage o'er far horizons hung,
Rose from the sea, pure as a bridal veil,
And made old England rare and beautiful;
But now, alas, ten thousand Stygian throats
Belch fumes of soot and grime before the sun.
The proud strut loftily with stern, high face
Of self-assured superiority.
The artisan who plies his native powers
In arts of peace is subjected to laws
So framed that unearned gain consumes
The product of his hand and brain and heart;

Humbly he walks before the face of those
Who eat the bread he earns, yet look on him
With scorning ill-concealed.

The money-lords
Who take, because they can, the wealth he earns,
Think all is peace while blight of bloodless war
Doth scar this England with a deeper wound
Than did her rose-hued, red-white wars of old.
There never can be peace while slaves make wealth
That curses its creators; while we yet
Turn eyes to heaven's smoke-tarnished light,
And call by other name than cowardice
Our base consent to banish the blue sky,
Erase the stars, and blot love out of life.
'Tis not an easy task to find a cure
For such a malady, 'tis harder still
To show the patient its necessity,
Before he learn it in the school of life.
Yon artsman, for example, needeth now
A wholesome lesson in simplicity.
True art doth not consist of mixt designs,
And yet he firds in his own heart a voice
That doth approve this strange complexity
And seal it with his soul's best certitude.
So must he toil till the true light shall shine.
Art is a living and eternal voice,
Speaks no dead language, never groweth old,
But shineth ever in perpetual youth.

What is the remedy for England's ills?
What balm will heal her hurt? This is my claim:
That every human hand should have such work
As shall be worth the doing, and, withal,

Pleasant to do, not over wearisome,
Nor burdened with too great anxiety,
A work that cannot fail of due reward.
"A dream," you say. Then realize the dream,
And you transform the face of all the world.

A thorough revolution is its cost;
It is a most plain word, and good, and hath
A wholesome meaning, speaks of noble deeds,
Partings of ways, and onward-going feet
That shrink not, so they move to final peace,
From paths that over grim Golgothas rise,
Or lose themselves in sepulchres of flame.
But revolution hath not for its aim
Merely to mitigate the worker's lot;
What boots to make the burden somewhat less,
Yet leave the soul content and tolerant
Of bondage? That were but an artful lure
To bind him still more firmly in his chains.
The cure must change his whole relationship,
And make him master in the house of life
Till every vision that inspires his heart
Take shape from his soul-longings, till his hand
With grace and kingliness shall speak the word
His heart forevermore would sing, till he
Shall walk in strength of purpose with firm pace
And laugh and love, and labour and be glad.

Let England wake; freedom is at her door.
The light breaks over all our stately lands,
The law gives voice effective to the poor,
Religion cedes the private right to think,
And million-throated justice cries aloud
And begs admittance to our common life.

Already men to juster ways are moved,
And clear eyes see the day, not distant far,
When all shall labour freely, uncompelled,
Each doing what his soul most profits by,
And that which ministers the common good.
Then shall be wholesome life, blue skies, green meads,
A modest wealth, high aims, deep joys, great loves,
Leisure for rest, and all the charms of home.
The soul of beauty, finding here a shrine,
Shall dwell again within these sea-girt lands.

This is my word, my answer to your quest;
Henceforth I hang the canvas of this dream
In every gallery of life, show it
On private wall, in public corridor;
Outline the picture of my heart's great hope
On every object fashioned by my hand,
Till each new product of my skill, in joy
Of labour and of love begotten, be
As if it were my child; till every soul
Be glad as children in a garden, and
England be Merrie England once again.

MOSES

Give ear, O Joshua! This morn
Jehovah said: "Get thee to Pisgah's height
And view the land that shall be Israel's
Before thou diest. My servant Joshua
Shall judge mine hosts."

The strength of God be thine.
The guiding of this people in His way,
Henceforth thy charge, needs wisdom of ripe years

And counsel of experience, both which
Are thine, for thou hast had the discipline
Of God in His best school, the wilderness.

My years are many, but my step is firm
As when in youth I strode along the Nile
In Heliopolis of Mizraim.
It seems but yesterday. I see even now
That line 'twixt green and gray, where leaf and flower
And all life terminate in seas of sand.
As in the olden days, the walls of On
Reflect the sunset glow, and purple fires
Enflame the summits of the Pyramids.
My thought, so hospitable to the past,
Would storm thy heart with vivid memories
And pictures of mine ancient deeds and dreams.
I saw in Egypt many tortured slaves
Of mine own blood, and dreamed of Israel free.
My heart, of royal nurture, was too hot
For counsel. Prompted by the sudden spur
Of awful wrong, I slew a brutal man
And fled self-banished to the desert. When
'Twas dark I journeyed on, hiding by day
Till, Etham's desert passed, and Elim's spring
Beneath the stately palms, eastward I bent,
And fared, with Horeb's solemn peak my guide,
To Midian's land. At last, I came to plains
Where the rocks ceased and nature was more kind.
There maiden-shepherds kept their flocks, and wells
And pastures were. The Midian shepherd-priest
Made me his guest and afterwards his son.

There I found God, and dwelt with Him who spake
In thunder and whose whispers were the stars,

From intimation of His presence came
The strange new hope that He was not aloof,
But near; and through the lonely years, this sense
To deep conviction grew. When silence reigned
Among the rocks, and, in my soul, God's fear,
A subtle spirit hovered o'er the plains
With wings of peace: and when the thunders blared
They seemed like hosts that to the battle marched,
Whose conchs and horns rang ling'ringly afar,
And shook the echoing hills with storms. But when
Jehovah's word came clearest, lo, the place
Was thrilled with awful majesty and peace
That swept with sunlike radiance through my soul.

One day, when Sinai's peak, more than its wont,
Shone golden, so its gleam was flung afar
Across the ancient solitudes, and flamed
The tamarisks with fire, till all the land
Quivered with light, while I afresh bemoaned
My kinsmen-slaves who builded Pithom's walls,
A sense of power into my eager soul
Surged mightily. I knew that God had given
The strength to do the thing I long had dreamed.

I went to Egypt in that day of God,—
The desert life had made me bold and strong—
The Pharaoh's will frustrated, led his slaves
Into the wilderness, so long my home.
Thou wilt recall the wind-dissevered sea,
The stony waste, rock-sentinelled and drear,
The weary going of the murm'ring hosts,
The manna food; how snow-tipped Horeb rose
Ensheathed in blue. There I, apart with God,
Was wrapt in wild rock-robes of solitude,
In grave communion with Jehovah's heart.

There wisdom came to sift Egyptian law,
Advance the leaden dawn of other gods
To great Jehovah's noon, and purge with light
The codes of Babylon. Ten words emerged,
The law of God to everlasting years.

The rest thou knowest well, for thou didst share
The irk of all the fear and faithlessness
Of that dumb horde that in the desert died.
Now, in their place, yon hosts invincible,
Rugged as rocks that sentinel the plains
Of Ishmael, wait thy commanding word.
Jehovah is their shield and battle cry,
And all their foes shall melt before His will.

Now I shall see the plain of Gilead,
And Carmel where it riseth to the sea
From Sharon's vale, the palms of Jericho,
And all the glowing West. Then shall God hide
My dust amid the peaks close to His heavens.
Nebo shall watch my tomb, Beth-Peor guard,
And Pisgah stand, my peerless monument
Throughout the star-crowned years.

1911

PAUL

The splendours of the open day
I cannot see, albeit 'tis June in Rome,
And summer radiance gilds the Capitol
With flame.

To-morrow, at the noon, I die;
Yet all the might of Rome cannot contrive
To make me cheerless while thy ministry
Of love dispels my loneliness and flows
The richer with my need.

Often of late
The soul's strange miracle of memory
Makes me the guest of mine own past. I dream,
And lo, with flapping sail, my little ship
Rocks on the Cydnus, or winds leisurely
Between its emerald shores. Now from the stream
Emerging, sea-winds catch my sail and drive
My keel through the green foam. Or in the night,
Becalmed in some wide stillness where the deep
Reflects the sky—a mirror pricked with stars
That silently glide down behind the sea—
I sleep as happy children sleep, and dream
I see afar before my prow the long,
Dim shores of Cyprus brooding on the wave
In God's still night; and the grave, silent eyes
Of all the stars seem smiling down on me
Out of their heavens.

And oft I dream I stand
Where Taurus opens into Syria
At the Cilician gates, whose purple peaks
Pierce to the highest blue. That western plain
Is Issus, where Darius' hosts clasped hands
With Death before the Macedonian.
Southward lies Antioch, restless and proud
And beautiful; and farther still, the land
Of Israel, my sacred fatherland.

Then drifts my dream to manhood's years awhile.
To wise Gamaliel and Hillel mild;
And oft I ask, how could the child who drank
Such milk of wisdom be one such as I,
Who would have drenched the land with Christian
blood
To prop punctilious forms? . . . . .

But soon my soul
Revolted from such tasks. One day I crossed
The Syrian plain while the meridian sun
Scorched with its fire Abana's fertile vale.
I mused, much doubting, if my deeds were just,
For I had seen a Christian martyr fall
With such a glow of faith and fortitude—
A Roman hero might have died to share
The joy of such a courage.

Peace had fled
My life, and I, who had authority,
Was my own soul accusing now, before
That bar where I not only was the judge,
But criminal convicted. When my pride
Was slain, came full surrender to the Christ.
My whole desire was now, to do His will.
And lo! from out the light appeared—His face.
All else, eclipsed in night, then disappeared
As when the stars fade out before the sun.
The day was darkened by the light that broke
In my transfigured heart. The charm of stream,
And vale, and mount, forgotten were. My soul,
Seeing that glow, had now beholden Heaven
And closed its eyes to glories of the earth,
Or passed unnoticing. The silence spake.
I might as readily have thought to stem
The avalanche on Hermon. His appeal

Set all my soul aflame and made my lips
A sword, the cross my battle cry. Thenceforth,
My Hebrew birth, my pride in Rome, were nought.
I knew no triumph but His cross, no joy
But in the courage that would do His will.

Thou knowest how the impact of my zeal
Fell on the Roman world, how I refused
To cover life and truth with masks and forms
Or priestly ordination, for I would
Not Judaize the race nor lay the bonds
Of Moses on an alien tribe. Was man
To lose a world-religion in a cult,
And turn the stream of universal hope
Into a desert of formality,
Make Christianity a Jewish sect
And end that dream for which Messiah died?
Were Roman necks to bear a foreign yoke
Because a wall was raised across Love's path
In Corinth, Antioch and Ephesus?
Thou, Luke, dost know I cleared an open way
To fields of life with no impediment
Of Jewish ritual or Gentile blood.
I hoped to see the hills of Spain and Gaul—
Both pagan yet—and even Britain's shore,
Since there the eagle flies, and I am still
A Roman. It may chance that some who bear
Rome's arms and were awhile my soldier-guards,
Have, even as this comrade of my chain,
Received the mind of Christ, and will proclaim
The cross of love in many distant lands.

By such new hope refreshed and comforted,
I bow submissive to His higher will,

Rejoicing that so soon mine eyes shall see
The glories of the King and feast with joy
Upon the open vision of His face.
Ah, Friend, what wonder if a wistful fire
Burns in thine eyes and eloquently speaks
The yearning of thy soul to see Him too.
The time is brief, be glad. Thou too shalt come
And be with Him, guerdon of all thy toils.

And meanwhile, thou shalt have the joy to write
On during scroll with love-inspirèd pen
The story of His life and fellowship
With men, as thou art minded in thy zeal.
But I shall find in His dear presence, peace
And fuller life. O Mighty Heart, behold,
I come! The sweetest word to me is death.
1910

SAPPHO

The darkness thins to dawn
And earth, expectant,
Waits the unrisen sun.
Even now, his smile is on Olympus.
Phœbus kisses first the gods,
Then stoops to lips of men.

Where emerald Scyros gems the wave
The ruddy splendours of the dawn
Dissolve to opal; voices of the sea
Speak low farewells to night,
And breezes play among
The cypresses and sycamores.

The northern path we take,
Between the oleanders and the sea,
For there the way is dewless
And from thence are seen afar
The ramparts of old Ilium.

Read to me now, Erinna dear,
Thy latest lay . . . . . .

Dear daughter of the sacred nine,
Thou singest tender cadences
Like zephyrs out of Eden.
Anon, the thought leaps from thy page
Upon my soul with such a passion
I could almost weep.
Thy vision far outstrips
The bards of Israel.
Such stateliness and majesty
Befit the toils of Herakles,
The deeds of Diomed.
Sonorous tumults rouse the sense
As when the hurricane
Roars down the skies
And shakes the ocean to white foam
Around those crags
Where Pelion and Ossa rise
In monumental calm.

Such is thine art,
But would I show the charm of thee,
Then must I paint a lovely dream
Of veilèd beauty through deep
Backgrounds stealing;

Must breathe the fragrance of the air
At the day's crimson dawn;
Must bend across the misty skies
A rainbow of bright prophecy,
And bury sorrow in a lotus grave.
Thy day of life shall glorious be;
I see the rays of an imperishable dawn;
I hear an ultra-tonal harmony
That moves me like the voice
Of singing waters,—
A massive undertone,
The sum of all those immortalities
That swell the great antiphonal of life.

A mist o'erspreads the ocean
With ghostly shroud
Like some weird shadow of myself,
A spectre of my happier years
That in the vastness of the gloom
Is my companion.

Fame lures my soul no more;
In thy young love more happy I
Than all the gods of Elis.
Let others choose the world
And all its torturing vanities;
Let me forever sing.

But now, farewell awhile
To Homer's land,
Enrobed by years and dreams
And soothed by crooning Time:
The sun rides up the sea
And Lesbos keeps a holiday.

The Tyrant wills thy presence at the games,
And jealously connives my absence
For his pride is surfeited
By Alcæus' flattery.
But thou shalt see me there!
Our smiles shall kiss across the light
When Sappho's name
From Mytelene's throat shall ring
And beat a myriad music on the air
Stabbing the envious heart of Pittacus
With rage, but gladdening thine
Whose love is constant as the sun
That flames the bosom of the sea.
Not boastingly I dare his frown,
But for my deep, undying love of thee.

Hark how the herald birds
Blow tiny trumpets to announce the day!

1916

SOCRATES

You say, Plato, that Alcibiades
Hath likened to the satyr Marsyas
Your Socrates; declares him petulant
And scornful, yet with words so piping sweet
That all perforce must listen and forget
Their ills. It warms the winter of my heart
To know that one so great—and he *is* great,
Hath he not led our arms victoriously?—
Should match my fame with Marsyas
Who taught Olympus music.

Is it well
That I should monish him more soberly
To speak? I think my Alcibiades
This once was far less drunk than was his wont,
But not less generous. Mostly he's both.
This, Plato, even thou canst not deny,
And yet, by Zeus, he owes me this and more.
I taught him virtue in his youth. This much
Was my just debt to him. I paid the debt
That virtue always owes to innocence,
Wisdom to ignorance, and age to youth.
I gave to him the mystic wand of truth,
So met all claim of Alcibiades.

Then he became a debtor to the truth
To make his deeds both wise and virtuous.
This hath he failed to do, as all men know.
In consequence, they say of Socrates:
"Behold this scorner of the gods doth lead
Young noblemen astray, for this is proved
In Alcibiades," conveniently
Forgetting Plato, Glaucus and the rest.

I saved his life one day at Delium,
Gave him a chance to be what he is not,
A better man. My life in turn he saved;
So I cry quits on this checkmate of death,
And let the debt of reputation stand
For what 'tis worth, his being bad indeed,
And mine no better for that very cause.
Let Alcibiades be beautiful
As is Apollo, clever as the maid
Oracular whom Delphic fumes make wise,
Yet, lacking virtue, he is poor indeed.

The soul is what it is. What would'st thou think
If some deft stroke of Alcibiades
Some sudden prick of prejudice or wit,
Disturbed my poise, destroyed my lofty peace?
Would'st thou not rightly say that Socrates
Lacks steadfastness and doubts his present course?

Or if a friend sincere and wise should hint
To such a soul—say Alcibiades
To Socrates—"Thou lackest this or that,"
And he should pout, put finger-tip in mouth
And say: "Thou art no more my friend,"
What would'st thou think of Socrates?
Or if an enemy disturbed his dream
With words of hate, would he not even yet
Say to his soul: "Lo, now thine enemy
Hath surely found the place that weakest is
In those strong walls that rampart 'round thy life;
Thou ow'st him much, see thou repair the breach."
Be Alcibiades my friend or foe,
Or merely what he is, whate'er it be,
Some service hath he done, however small;
I thank him for it heartily, and hope
To profit by his words, and thus his debt
To me diminish at the very least,
Or quite annul.

Have we not done the right
By feeling no resentment in this case?
What say you, Plato? . . Aye? And Glaucus, too?
All are agreed. Ourselves, none else can hurt.
To find the truth is to receive a crown.

1911

WAGNER

Nothing is what it seems. You pierce the forms
With deeper vision, ere you find their soul,
But then you find it better than it seems.
In darkness beauty hides, but peeps anon
Around the corners of the night and laughs
In rippling morn, is coy and blushes rose
When caught, then smiles her gladness to the eyes
Of her true poet-lover, and, content,
Rests joyous on the bosom of the day.
In silence music lingers, throbbing there
All voiceless, till, like some sweet nightingale,
Joy sets the heart aflame, the spirit free,
To fill the yearning soul of night with praise.

The background of my life, though stern and sad,
Was not all loneliness, for jeer and jibe,
Exile and want, seemed naught when I could claim
The noble loyalty of such a friend
As thou, dear Liszt. Oh, not in vain was toil!
Even sluggard fame might wait. It mattered not
If I might hear thy finger-tips, inspired
By boundless love of music and of me,
Flame out the drama of my soul; could see
Thy tear-filled eyes proclaim my work divine.
When all the world was frowning darkly yet,
I found such comfort here as angels bring;
When exiled, where the lonely mountains heaped
Before my eyes their grave solemnity
And dwarfed my human schemes with show of power,
How could my faith have stood so steadfastly
And never dwindled to evanishment,
Had not thy faith sustained mine own? Oh, Friends,
If fame is surely coming, as ye say,
To lay immortal honours on my brow,

All ye must share the triumph of my name
And join it to the glory of your own!

Most dear Cosima, I would tell the world
How white the vestal fire within my soul
Flamed to the sacred torch of thy pure love.
Thou too shalt reap my fame with me—thine own,
For who shall say that love is less than toil.
Ah, Love is all. It cancels every pain,
Erases care, and sorrow banishes;
It moves the soul to all sublimities,
And ends the evil in long-promised good.
Thus was the bleakness of my life assuaged,
And all my pain and loneliness made sweet
When great soul-thirst impassioned all my song.

No fine emotion can impel the soul
To strong expression till the sifting light
Of sorrow cleanse the spirit of all dross;
Till irresistible necessity
Push him through pain to fortitude, through storms
To power, to reach, by toilsome ways, the hills
Of dream. Soul music, passion-born, and framed
In noble score and rare libretto, like
All works of God, though child of sound and Art,
Is all conceivèd by the Holy Ghost.

Pastime to most, Music to me is fire
Of longing, urge of aspiration, stress
Of unfulfilled desire. I fling my own
Hot heart into the crucible of truth,
Mix with the subtle alchemy of love,
And set it deep into the fiery soul
Of Being. When the whole is now become

Transparent as the eye of innocence,
I pour it into moulds of mightiest Art
To fill the bowl of all the years with song;
For Art translates the essence of all things
To terms of life.

It is a sacrament
To pioneer new paths of song, discern
New laws for making music, until now
The liquid art; to make it solid too,
Massive and mountainous; to sculpture it,
Shaping from Andean peaks the domes and towers
Of temples bathed in floods of golden light
And swept by storms; to chisel monuments
Of music, which anon do melt and sink
To sudden seas whose billows roll and crash,
Breaking upon life's beaches everywhere,
Foaming and turbulent.

Of late, my soul
Conceived a noble theme, which, as I hope,
If force and fire of inspiration hold
Their present course, shall be a thing of power.
Tannhäuser sings the unappeasèd cry
Of desolation where heart-hunger reigns
And hopeless dearth. What now I do
Shall add to this and Lohengrin a field
So lofty in its promise that the three
Shall constitute a solemn trilogy,
Whose voice shall ring upon the battlefield
The storm of conflict, waged 'twixt sense and soul
In life's tremendous war. The Nibelung's song
Portrays the struggle of the human heart
By passion tossed, now by the sense enslaved,

Anon upholden by the soul, and tuned
To nobler purposes by grip of fate's
Inexorable hand; but this shall show,
If I can so contrive, a glimpse of God,
The soul's divine, immeasurable claim
To be supreme above the urge of sense.
This is my hope in Parsifal.
1913

WHITMAN

One day in June, my higher self, emergent
From the soundless deeps,
Rose to new life ineffable,
Beyond all signs, beyond descriptions.
Speech into knowledge passed;
Opinions lost their meaning;
Soul-dimness and depression changed
To ecstasy of flight and soaring exaltation.
The creeds, conventions, categories, castes,
Were swept by final, bold assurance
Out of experience as meaningless and nought,
As dead leaves of a past vitality.

Straightway, I knew there is no death.
No evil thing can challenge Love
And shake its damning fist in face of Heaven,
Threatening the soul forever.
The cure of wrong is light and love;
Of baser wrong, a light more penetrant,
A love more buoyant and more brotherly.
There is no gulf 'twixt great and small;

I find the wholesome duties and sweet cares
Transcend all pleasures, wealth, art, intellect.
Even democracy dwindles to measurable proportions
In comparison with common things
Agleam with good.
The trees and grass are part of a wonderful dream.
The streams and stars of light
Are thrilled with mystery of life,
Dazzling my being with mute joy.
The animals, placid and patient,
Are of one soul with me. I swear
That every one of them to me is dear.
They do not torture themselves with self-accusing,
Or lie awake at night bemoaning their sins.
They are never convicted of hypocrisy,
Or cant of a silk-ribbon sainthood.
They are not bound hand and soul
By cable conventions. Not one of them says:
"I have suffered." They are not melancholy.
Not one of them is a gossip or a busybody.
They are not rich, nor respectable, nor unhappy,
Alienated from themselves by owning things.

This is my word to the people:
Resist much; obey little. Once fully enslaved,
No nation ever resumes its liberty.
Why should you snub opportunity
Or fear to be interesting to yourselves?
Why should you write only quotations
On the white pages of time?
Readjust the sentence of life to your own satisfaction;
Accept the unusual, the inconvenient, the heroic;
Fuse present and past laws
To make yourselves a new law every morning.

Consider the honest farms and homesteads,
The wealth-producing factories,
The trade by land and sea.
Valid are the deep integrities,
The inevitable virtues, excellent graces.
Necessary too, stern Justice that drives
Iniquity and dishonour out of the land.
Beautiful, self-denying motherhood and fatherhood,
And not less beautiful, brotherhood and comradeship.

Ah, you with threadbare coat and haggard eyes,
Little you dream how I feel towards you;
And you with timid glance and hesitant,
Walking anxiously, carefully through the throng,
Little you suspect how I love you.
I have waited all my life to find you.
After long years you have come
To live on the same planet with me,
On the same continent, in the same city.
I look deep into your eyes and am glad
That the gods did not plant us in separate worlds.

But oh, to walk with you
Where freedom is of space and air,
Defended only by light and love,
To stand with you in the universal day;
Dissolving conventions, and bonds, mine and yours,
Escaping utterly from alien anchors and holds;
To drive free and far, to waive
Ordinations, superiorities, professions,
Ideas like skeletons, slow to crumble,
Mythologies, useful as playthings;
To dare made-to-order destructions!

How I would make the eyes laugh and dance
That are haggard and anxious,
The feet bold and nimble and daring
That are timid and fearful;
Till all comrades of earth, free and buoyant,
Love, working; work, loving;
Till life as deep as the sea,
Till love and sex as pure as the dew,
Breed sons and daughters strong to run
As the wild things that breathe the air of the mountains!

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